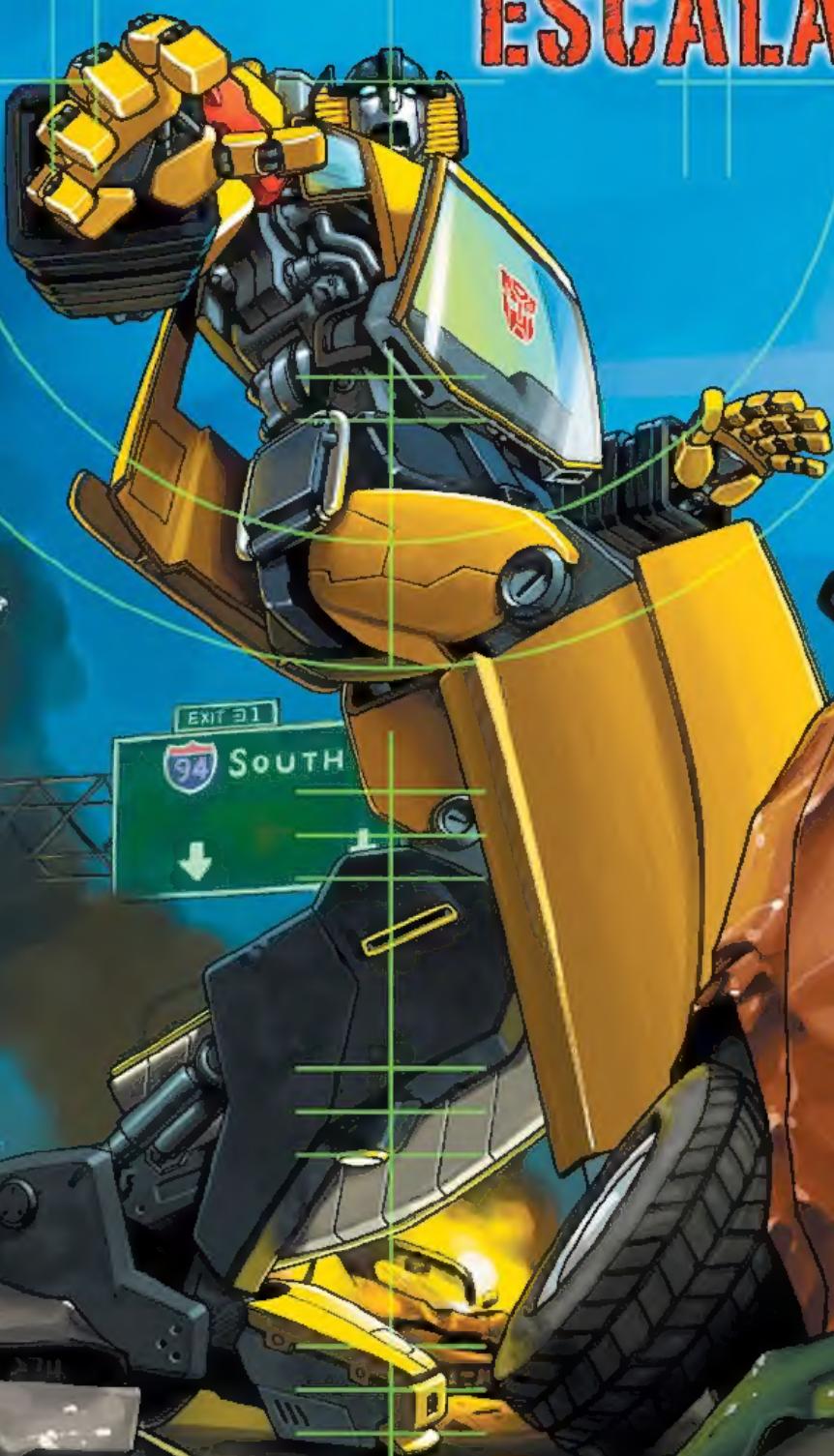




THE TRANSFORMERS™ ESCALATION





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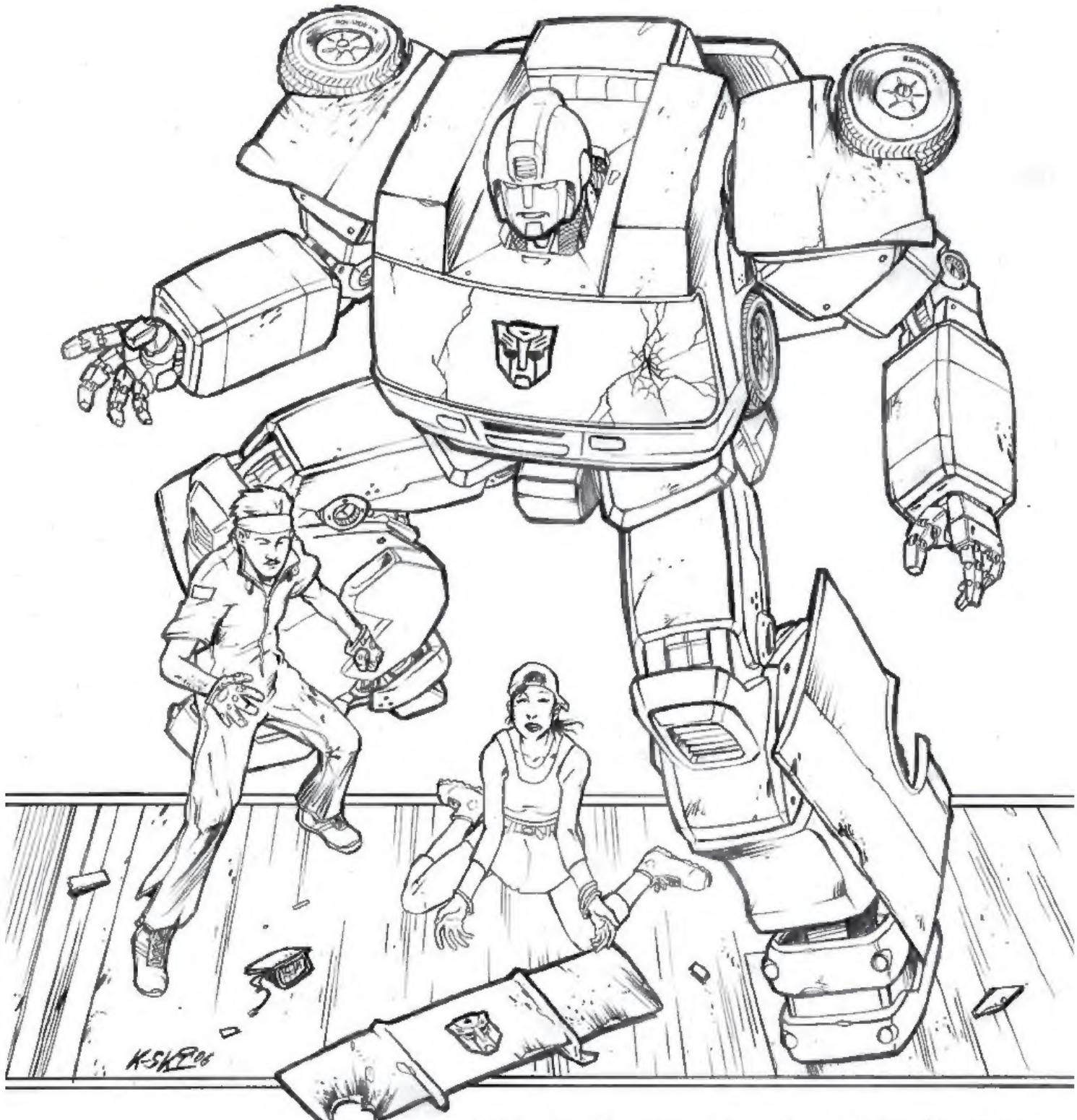


ESCALATION



THE TRANSFORMERS™

ISSUE #1
RI-B



ESCALATION



THE TRANSFORMERS ESCALATION

WRITTEN BY: SIMON FURMAN

ART BY: E.J. SU

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MYERS

LETTERS BY: CHRIS MOWRY

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COVER BY: E.J. SU

VARIANT COVER BY: KLAUS SCHERWINSKI



ISSUE NUMBER ONE

Present day Earth: the DECEPTICON infiltration gambit has begun, the opening moves made in a multi-layered strategy that may well spell the total and utter destruction of the planet. Having dispatched his traitorous unit commander, STARScream, MEGATRON has taken control of affairs on Earth, the discovery of Ore-13 (a potent variant on the long-exhausted CYBERTRONIAN power source known as ENERGON) meriting his personal attention. Now, the local AUTOBOT tactical response unit (from their hidden base beneath the surface of Lake Michigan) and their newly arrived commander-in-chief, OPTIMUS PRIME, prepare for the worst.

PHASE TWO BEGINS...



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Special thanks to Hasbro's Aaron Archer, Elizabeth Griffin, Amie Lozanski and Richard Zambarano for their invaluable assistance.

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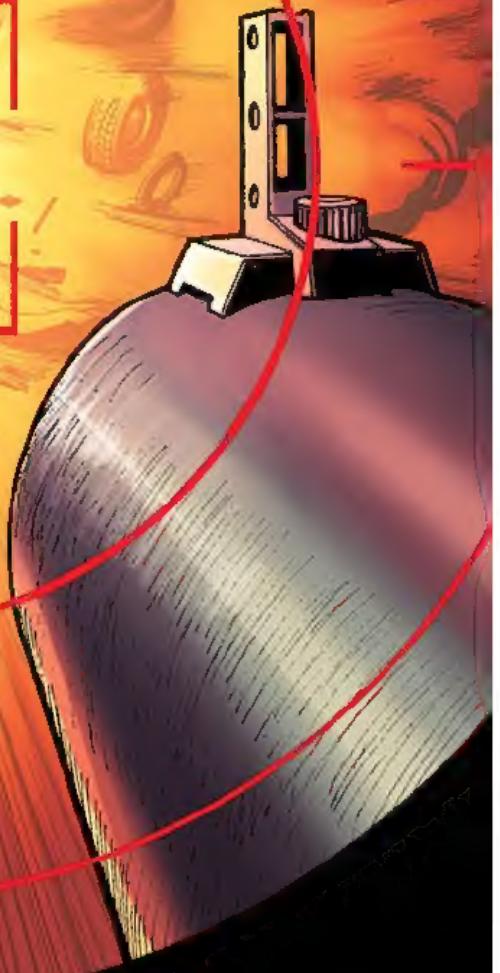
"THIS IS HOW IT GOES DOWN..."

"ON THE OPEN ROAD,
MAYBE JUST WITHIN SOME
CITY LIMITS SOMEWHERE,
THE TARGET IS ISOLATED..."

"...IMMOBILIZED."

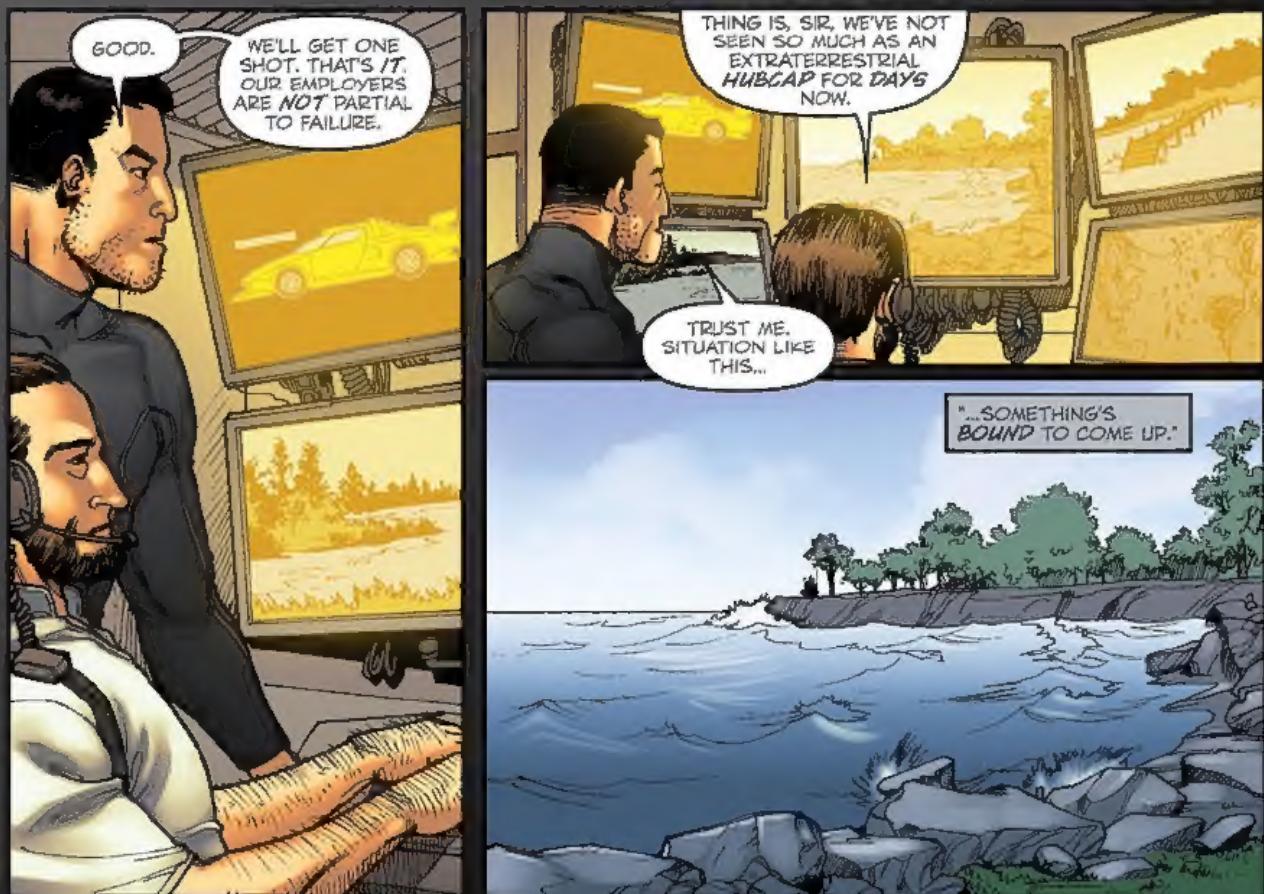
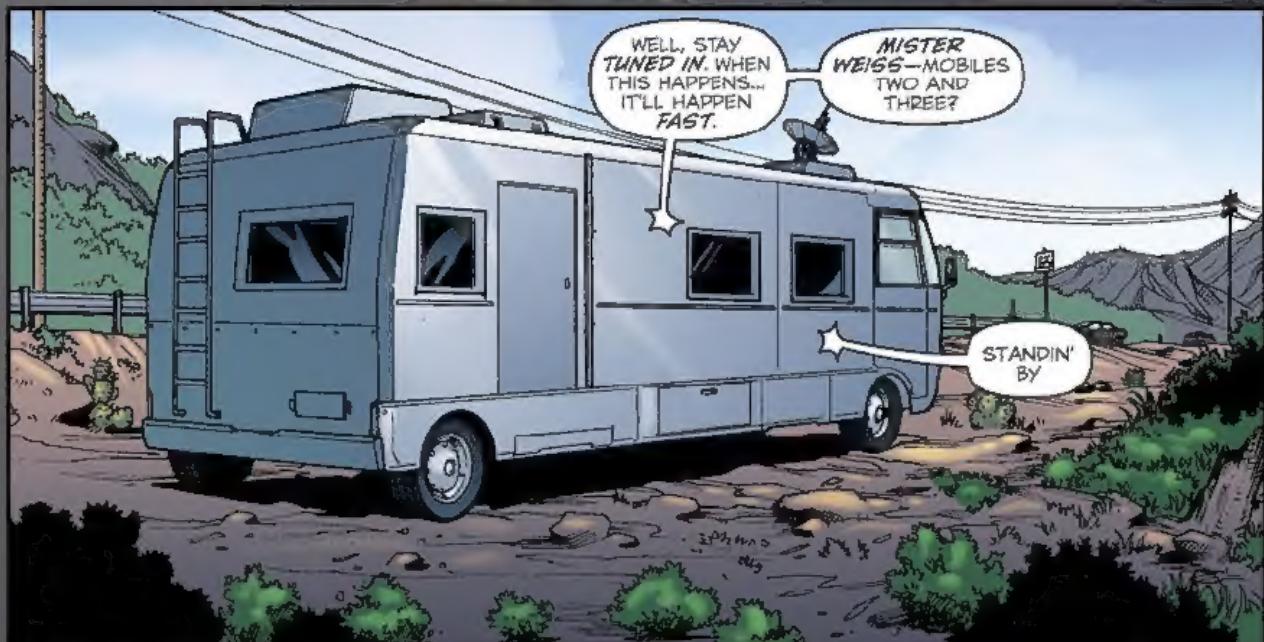
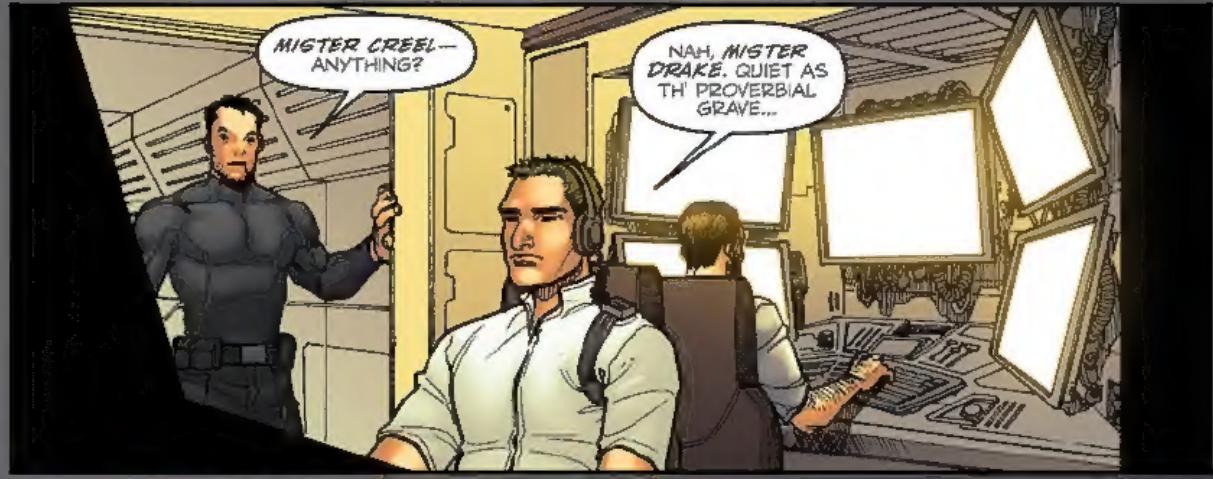
"THEN..."

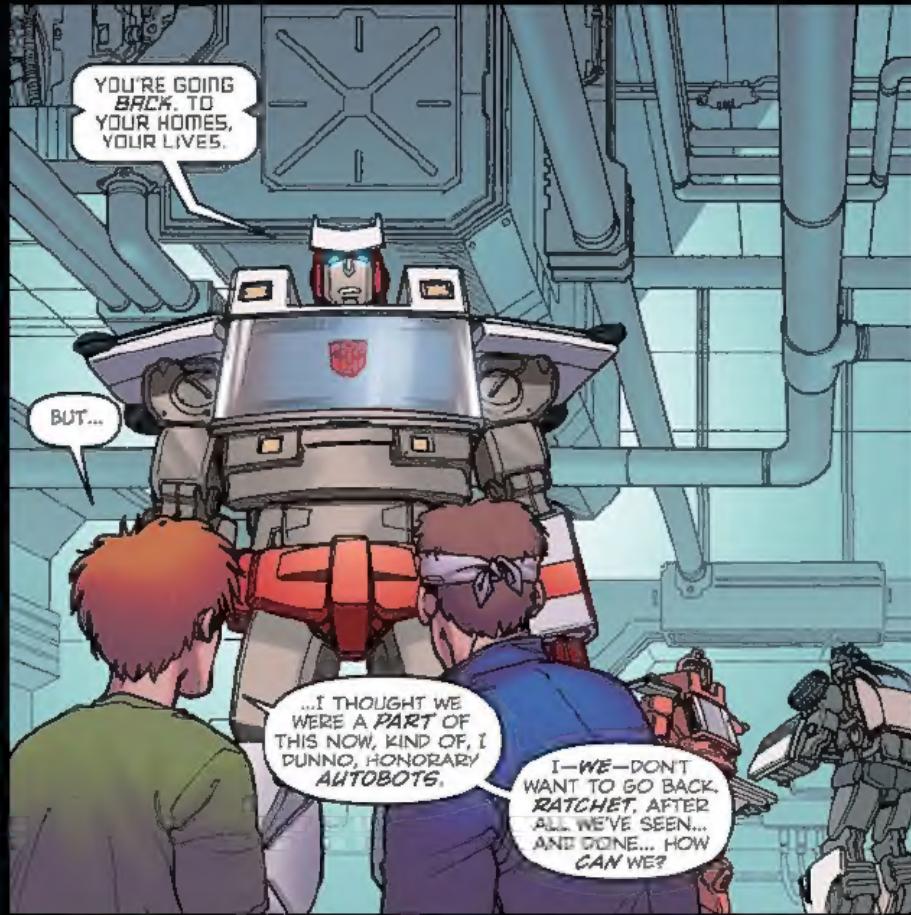
WHOOOMPH



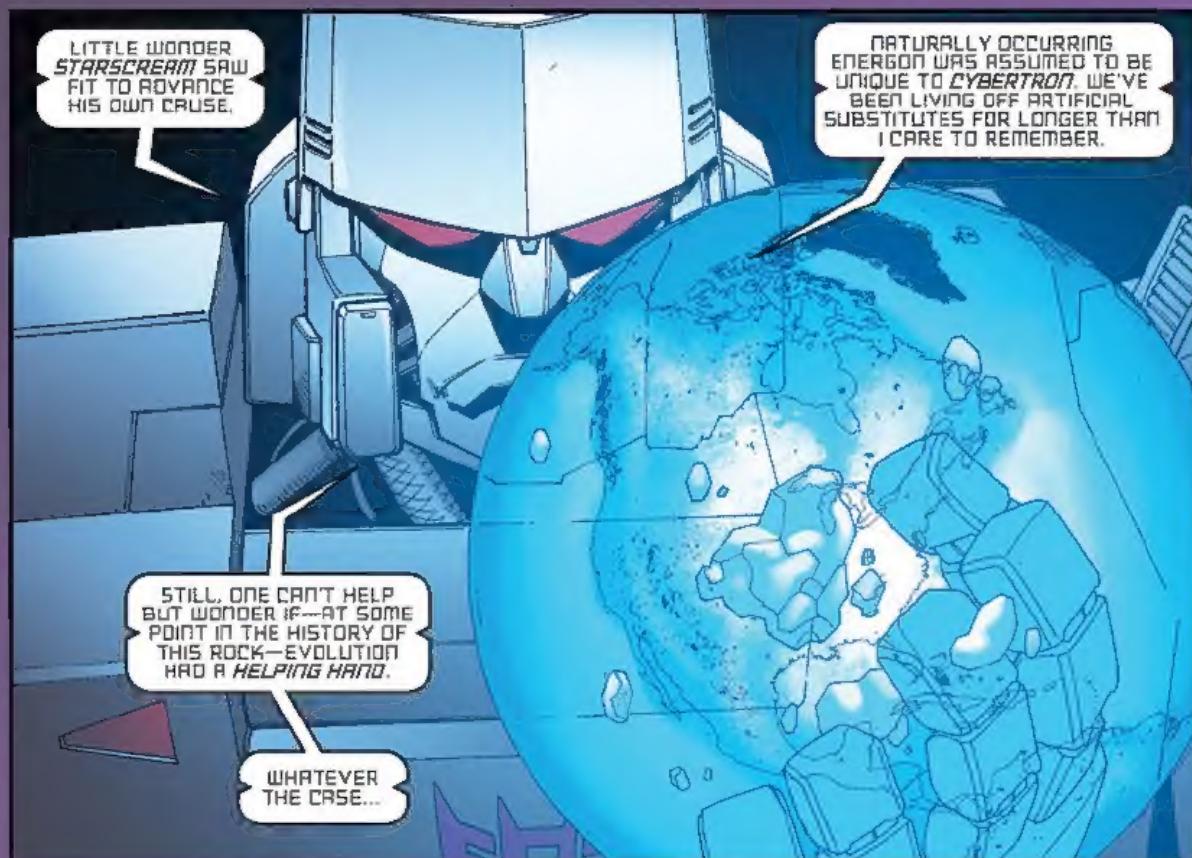
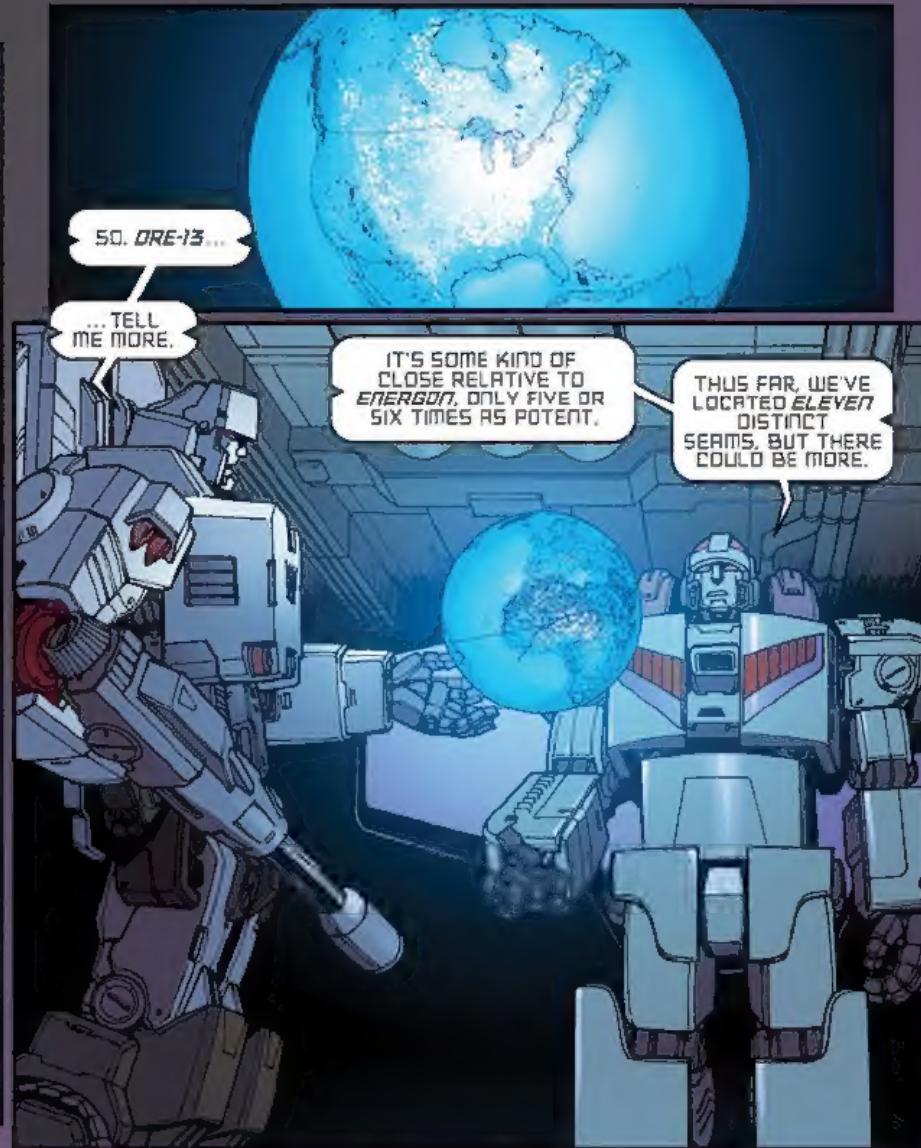
"ONE LESS
ALIEN MECH."

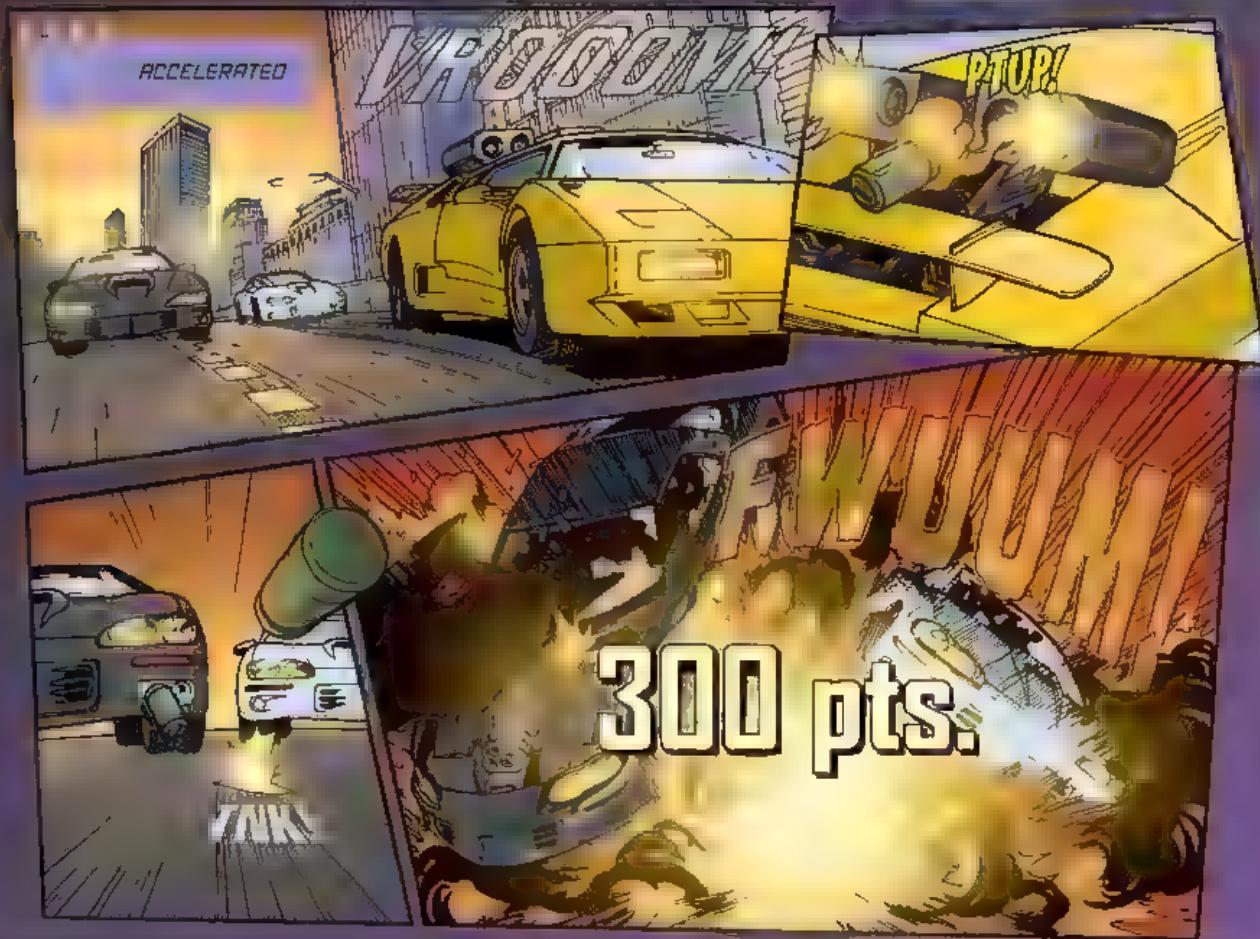
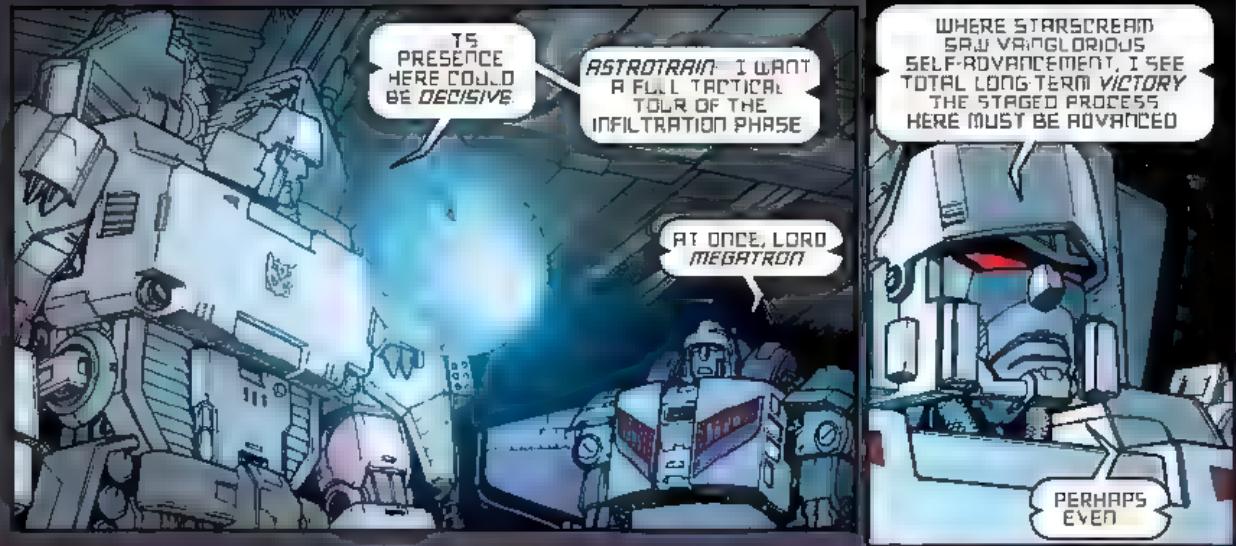








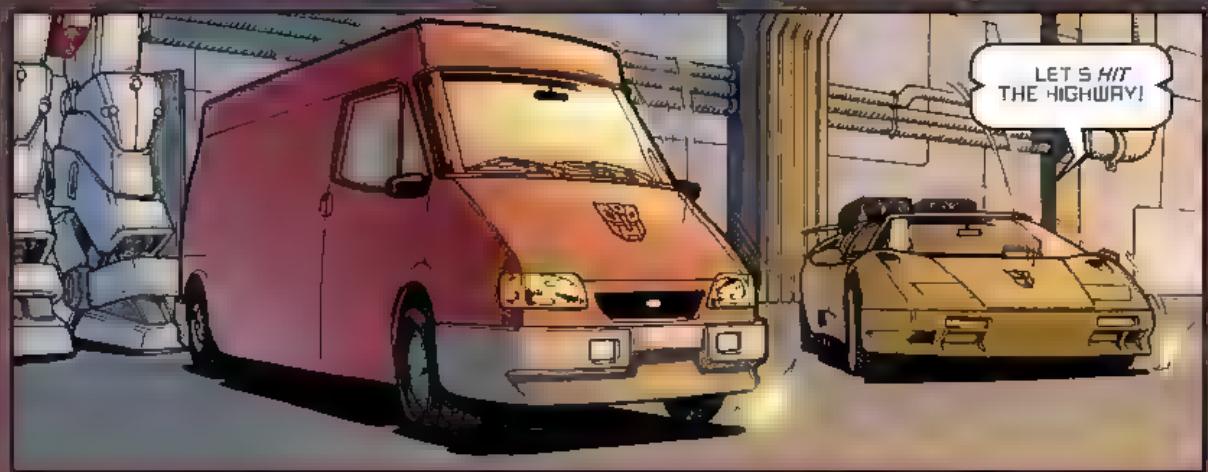
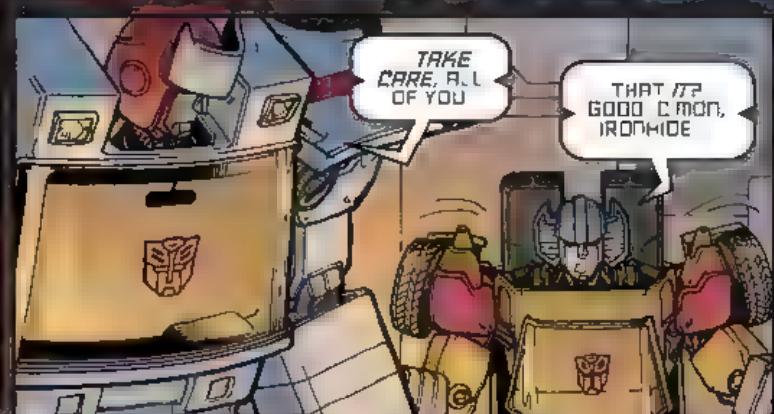
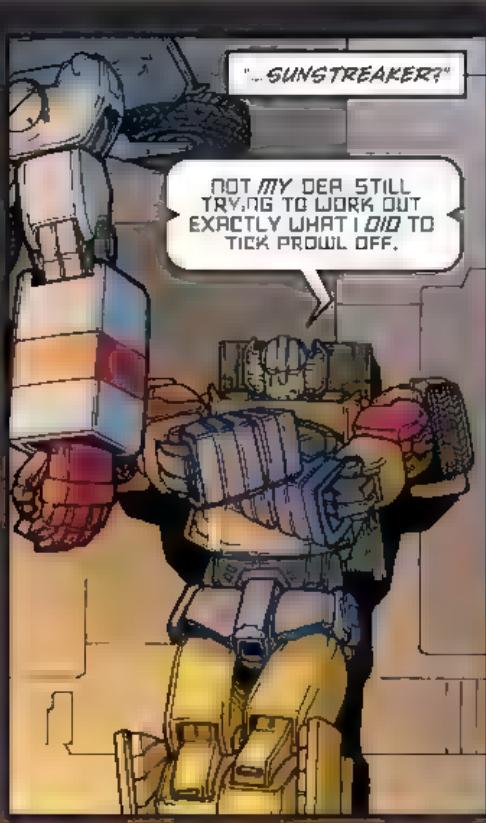
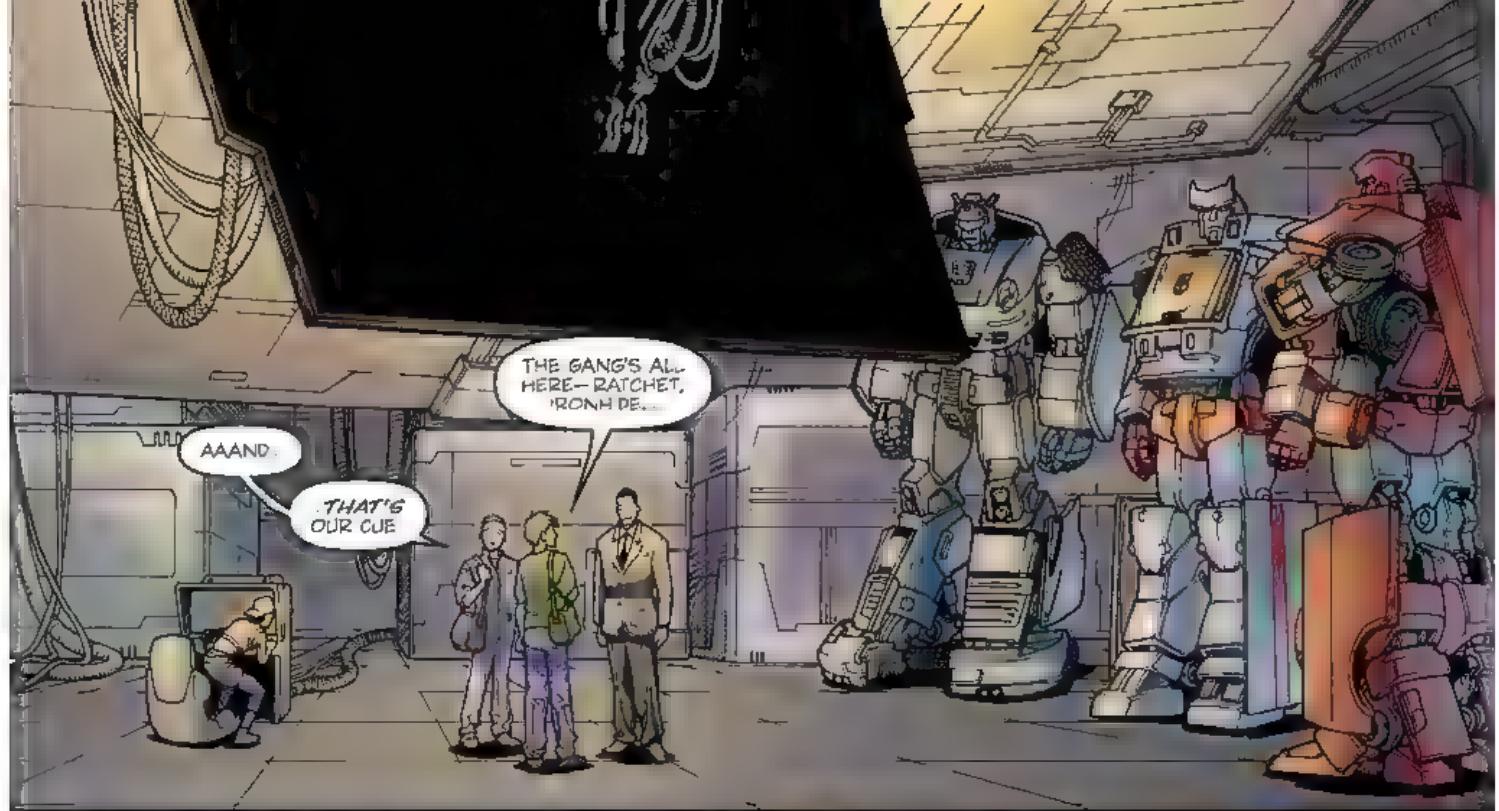






OH RIGHT
MY BRO





FOUND
SOMETHING I'M
FASTTRACKING IT
TO YOUR SCANPOINT
SYSTEM

...STABILIZED,
BUT WE HAVE
ESCALATING
FLASHPOINTS IN

UP
TO HIS OLD
TRICKS AGAIN
I'M BRINGING
HIM IN

INFILTRATION
UNIT HAS GONE
TO GROUND
AGAIN

PRIME?

THE HUMANS
ARE GONE

WE MAY NOT
BE ABLE TO
SAVE THEM OR
THEIR WORLD

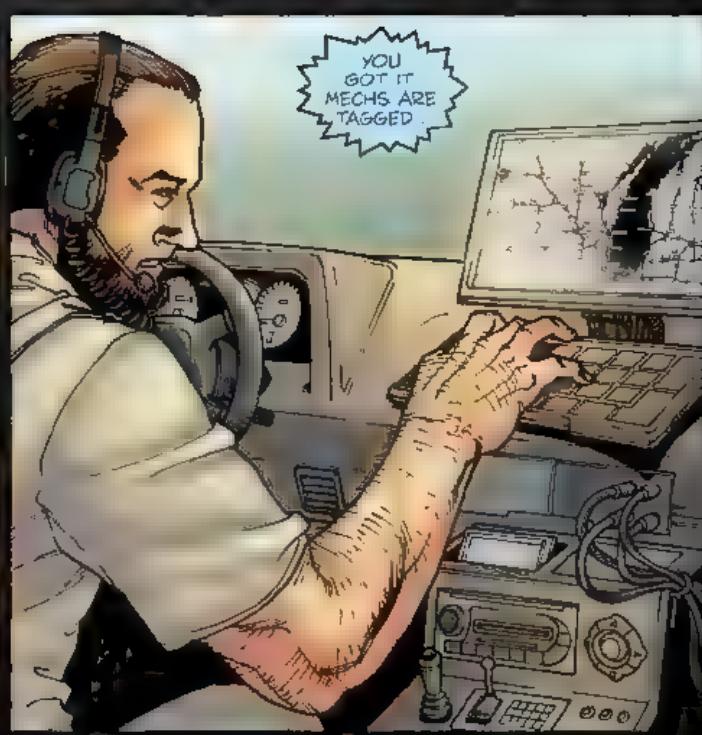
THANK YOU, PROWL.
IT'S IMPORTANT WE
MAINTAIN A HEALTHY
DISTANCE FROM ANY
INDIGENT SPECIES.
ESPECIALLY WHEN,
ULTIMATELY

PROWL—DISTURBING
NEWS HAS JUST REACHED
ME. IT WOULD SEEM FROM
PARTIALLY DECONSTRUCTED
FILES RECLAIMED FROM
BLUDGEON'S DATA-WELL
ON CYBERTRON

WE ARE NOT
THE FIRST
CYBERTRONIANS
TO SET FOOT
ON EARTH

JETF RE FOUND
HISTORICAL REFERENCE
TO BOTH SHOCKWAVE
AND SOUNDWAVE.
THE QUESTION IS

WHERE ARE
THEY NOW?

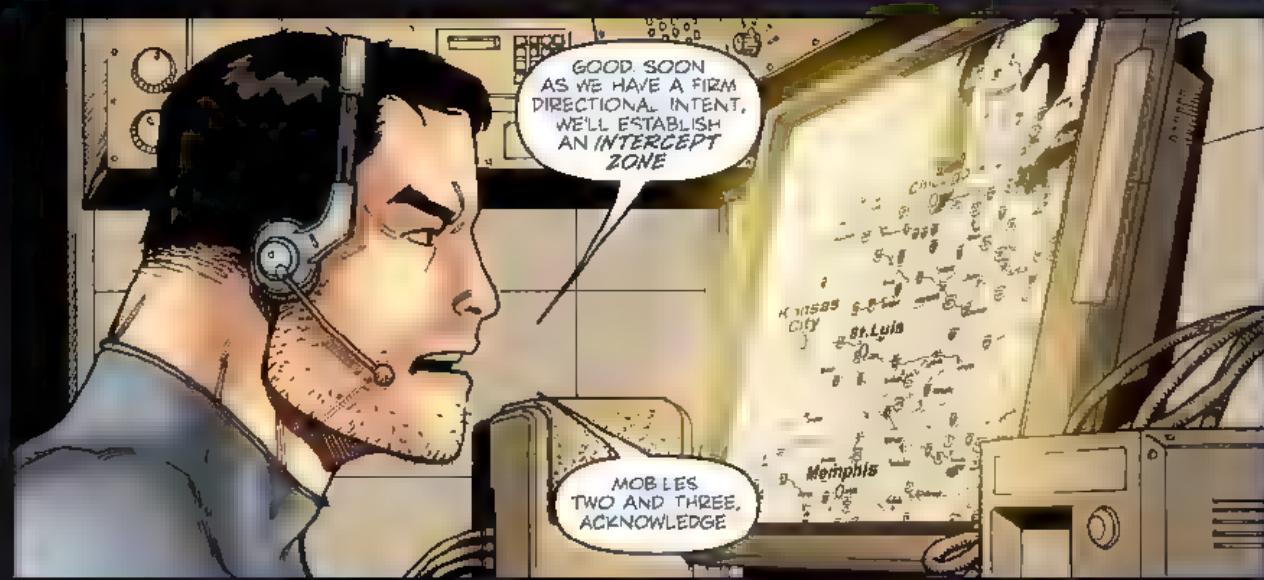


"... AND MOBILE."



GOOD SOON
AS WE HAVE A FIRM
DIRECTIONAL INTENT,
WE'LL ESTABLISH
AN INTERCEPT
ZONE

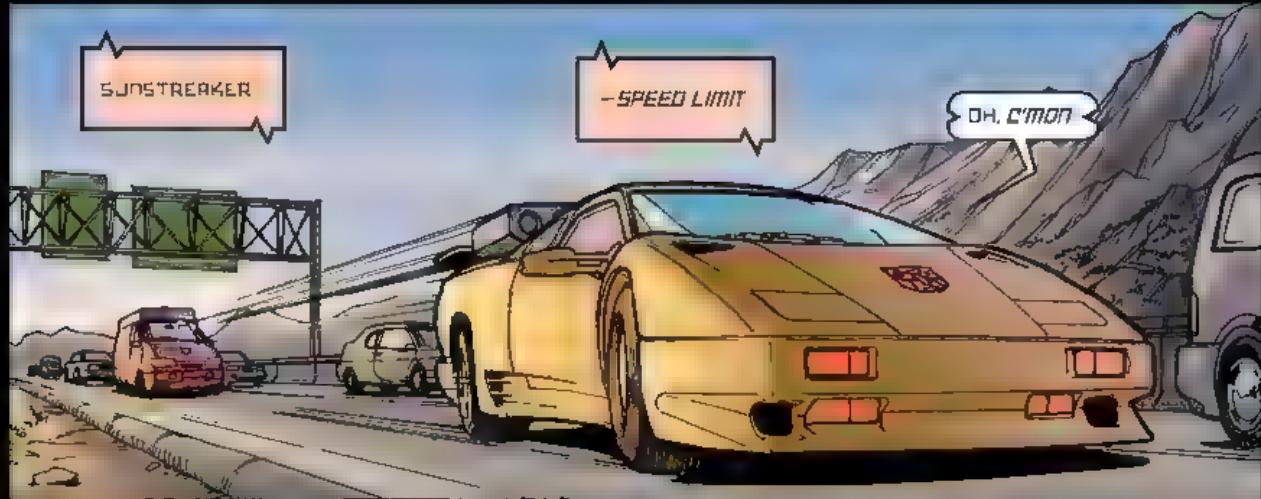
MOBILES
TWO AND THREE,
ACKNOWLEDGE

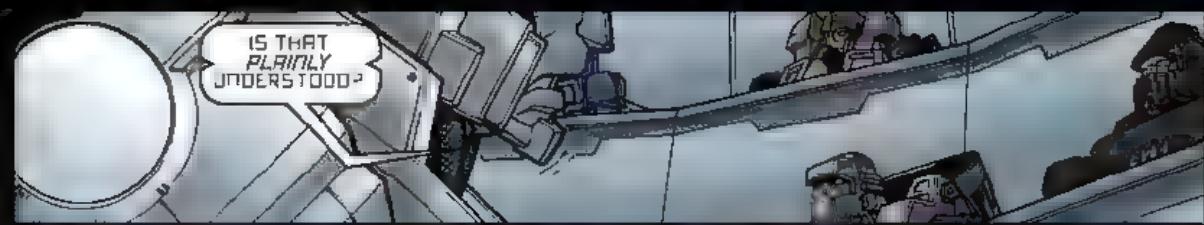
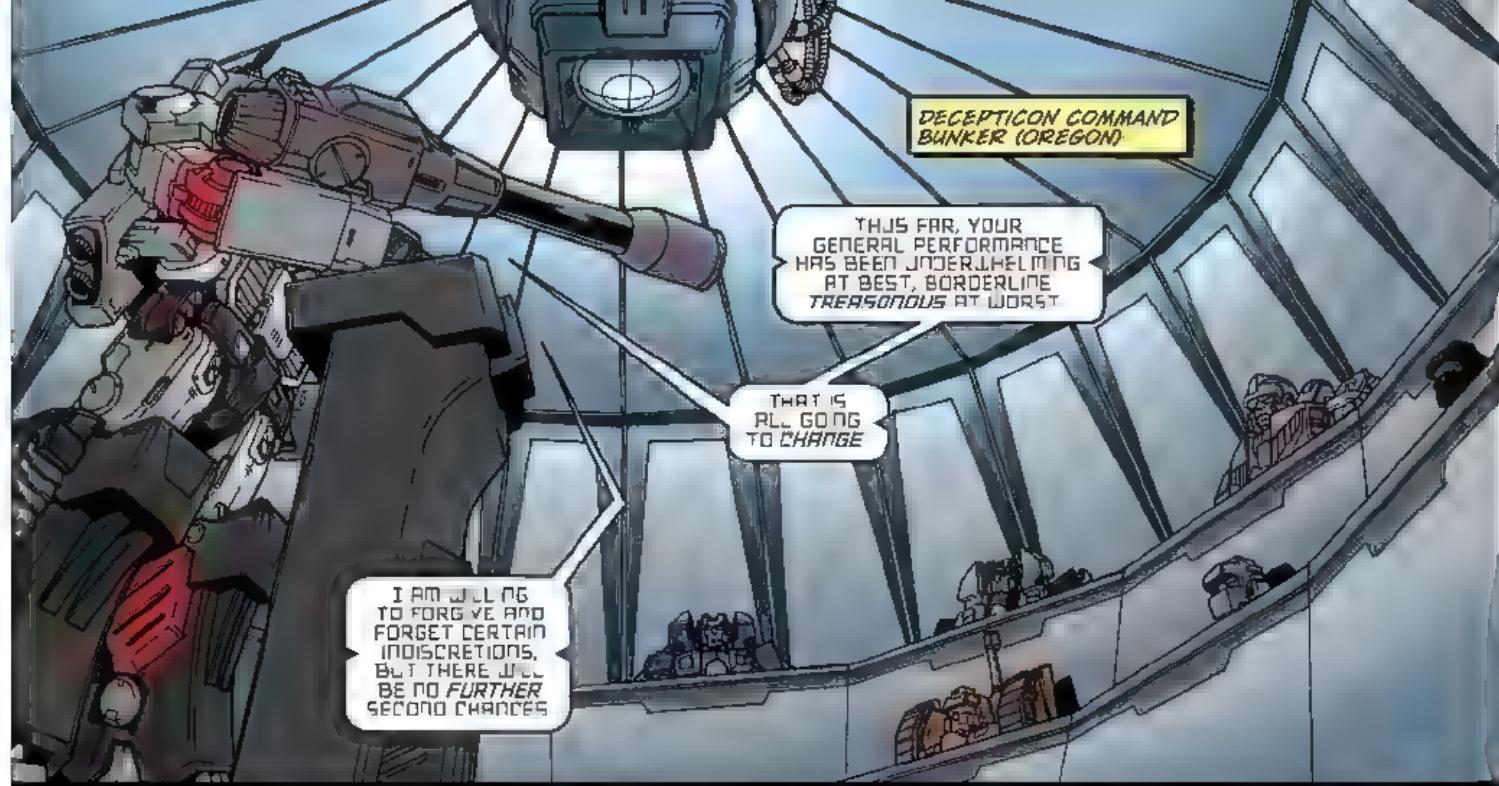


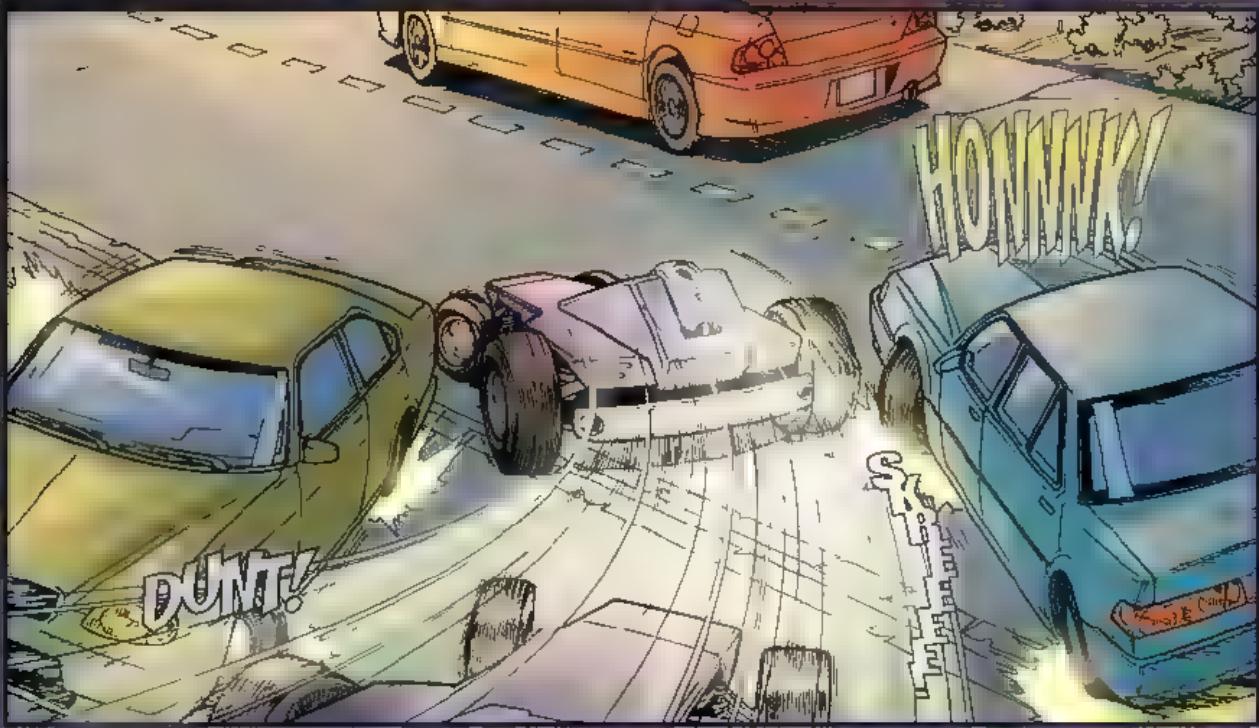
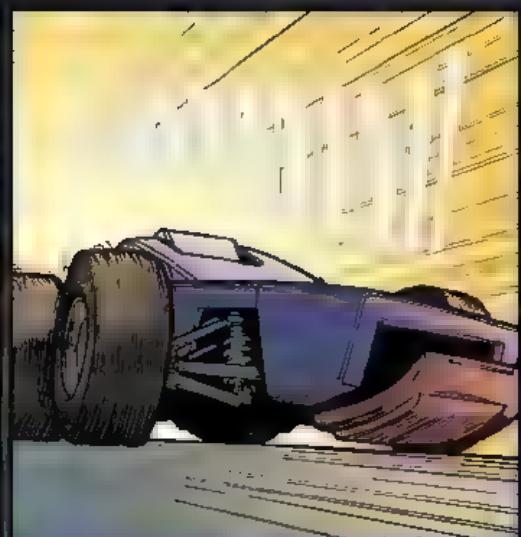
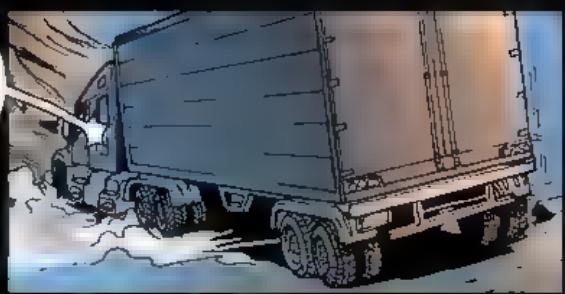
MOBILE TWO
TRACKING...

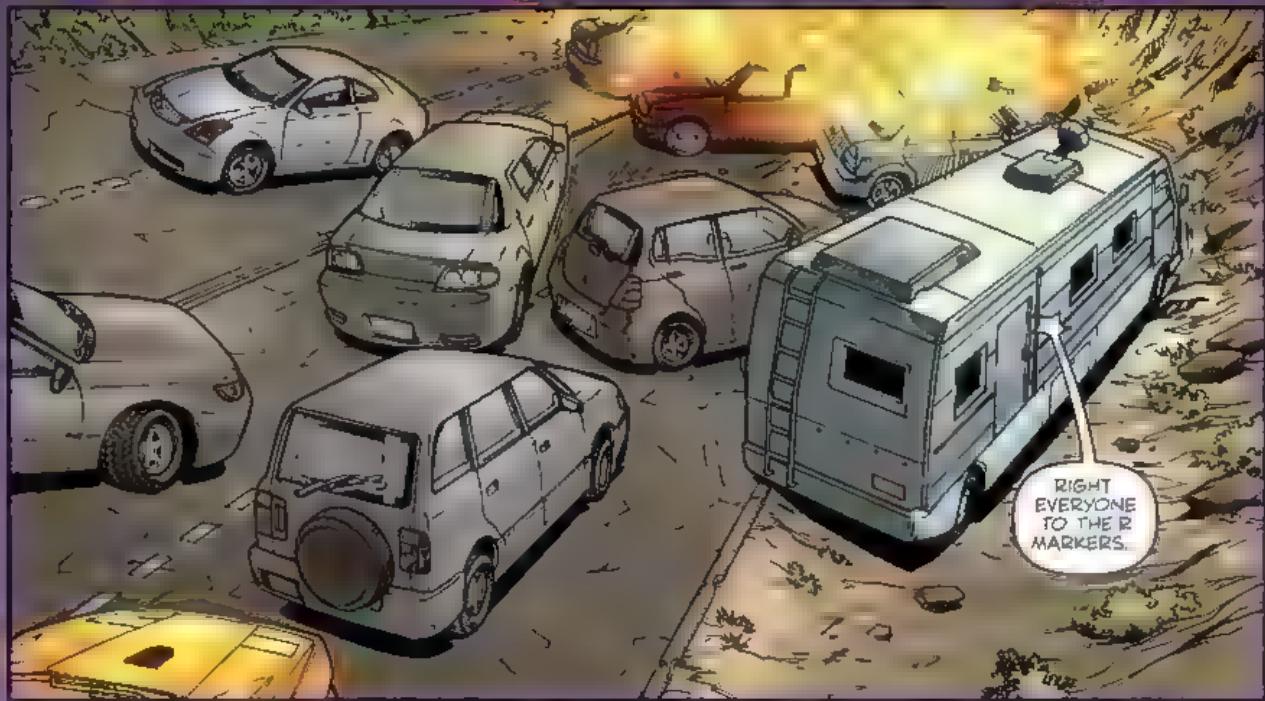
MOBILE THREE
TRACKING...

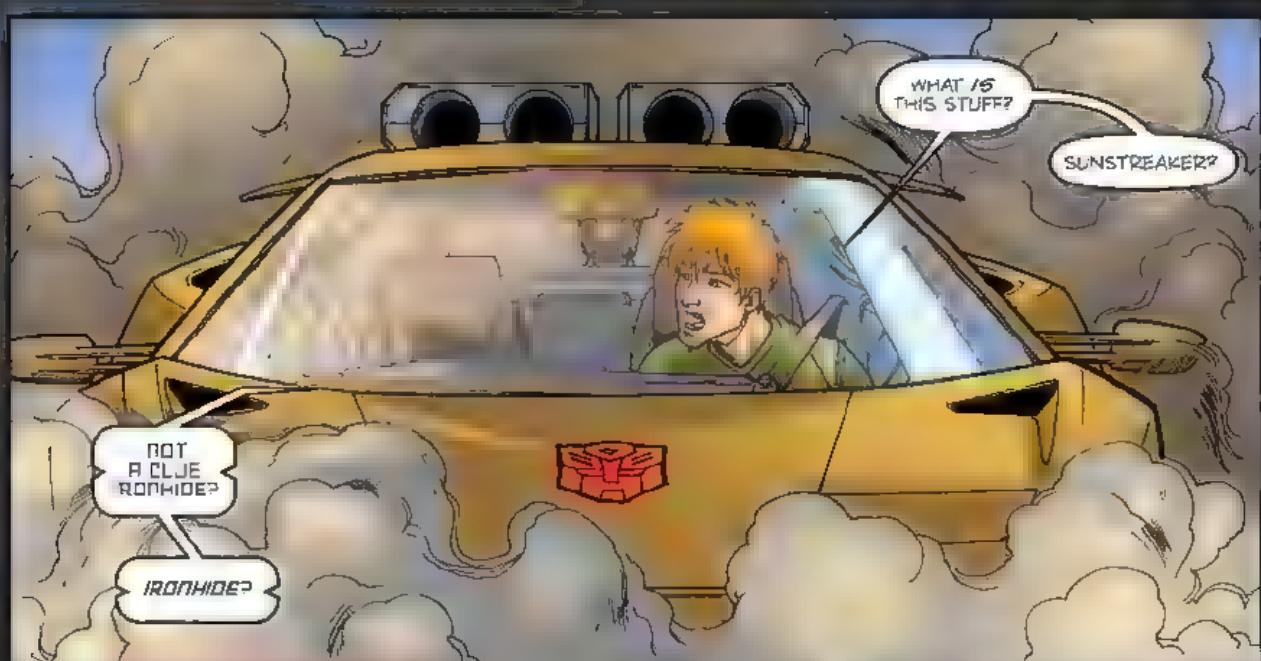


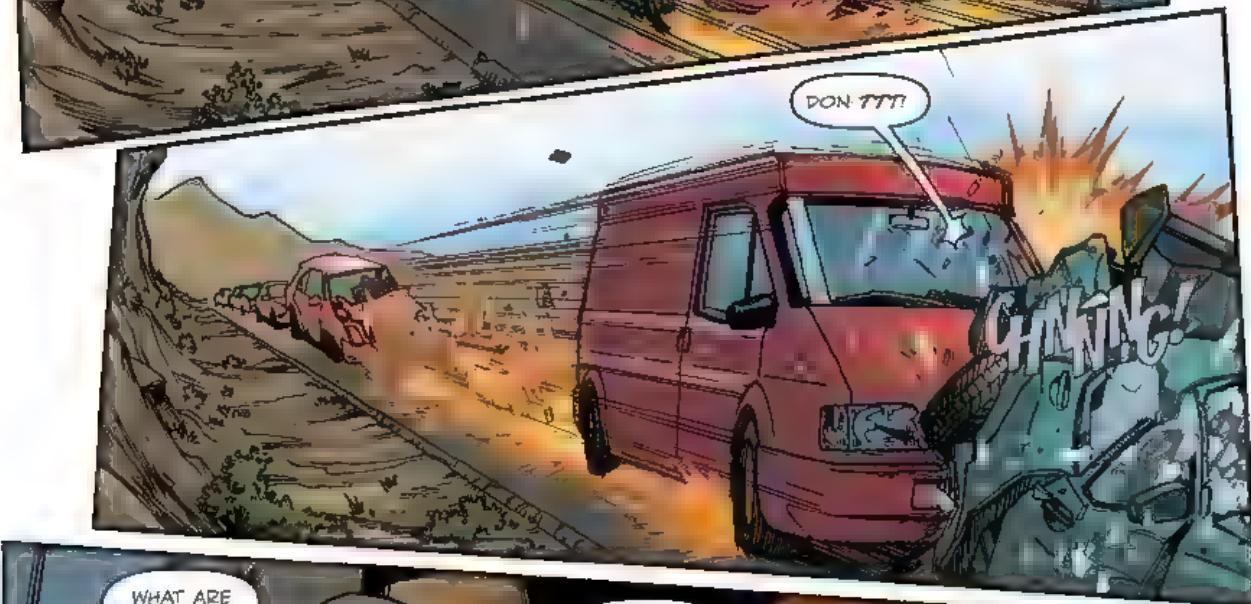






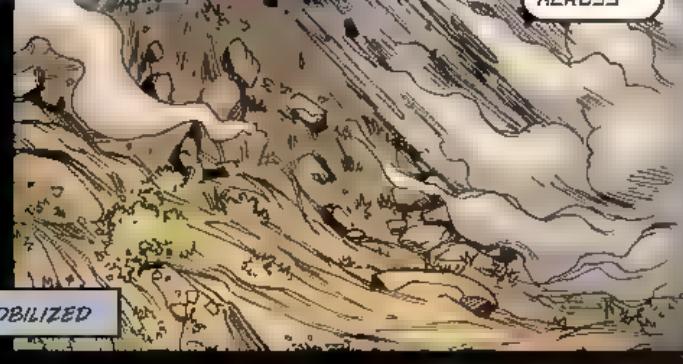


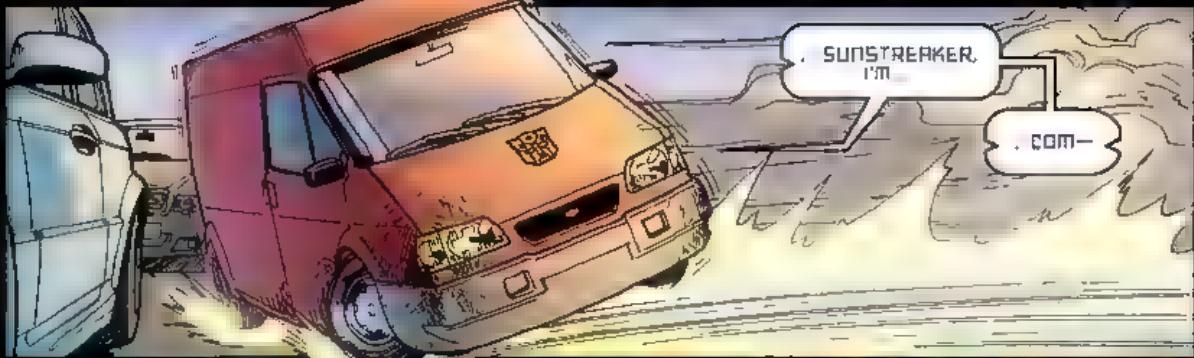
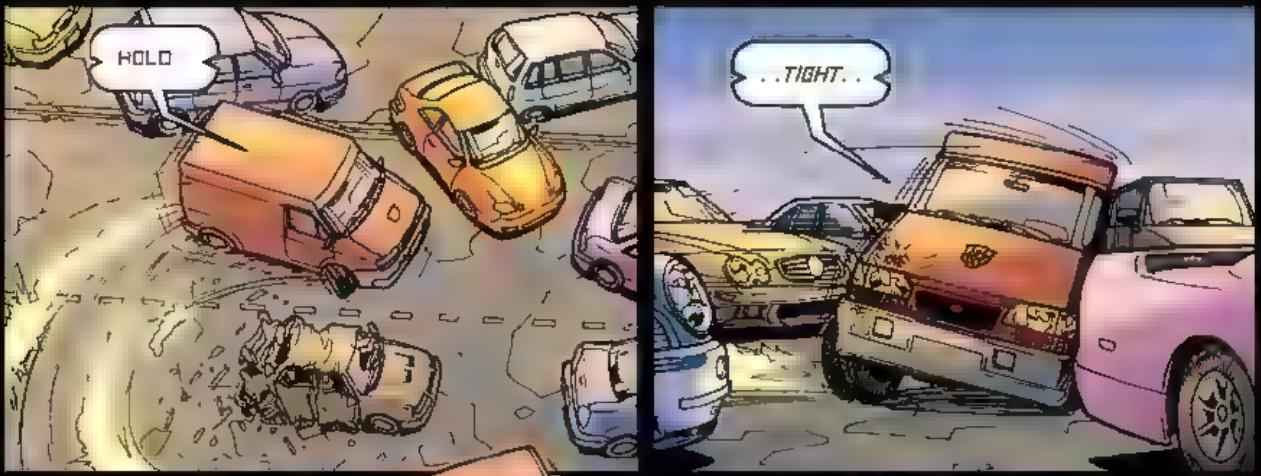








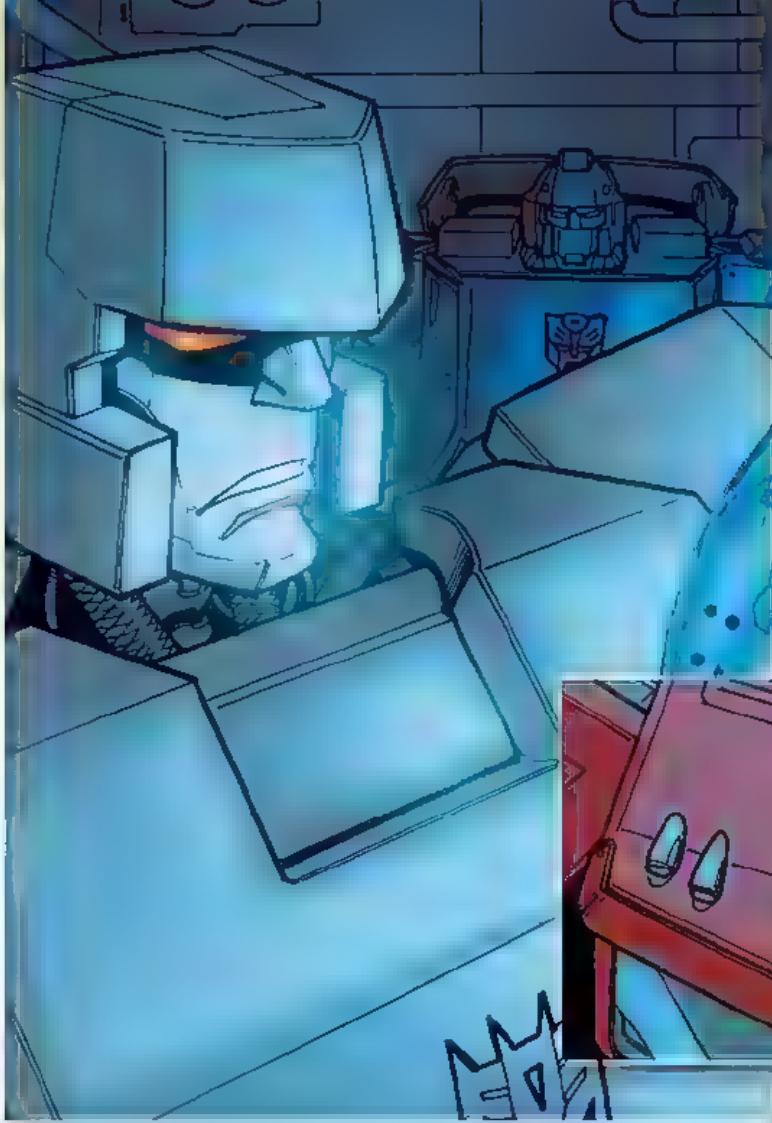






TRANSFORMERS ESCALATION





THE TRANSFORMERS ESCALATION

WRITTEN BY **SIMON FURMAN**
ART BY **E.J. SU**
COLORS BY **ZAC ATKINSON**
LETTERS BY **NEIL UYETAKE**
EDITS BY **CHRIS RYALL & DAN TAYLOR**

COVER BY **E.J. SU**
VARIANT COVER BY **KLAUS SCHERWINSKI**

ISSUE NUMBER TWO

ESCALATION

The mysterious organization known as the Machination has struck! On the outskirts of Lebanon, Missouri, with controlled precision, AUTOBOT trooper SUNSTREAKER and his human passenger HJINTER O'NION, have been ruthlessly taken out of the game. As OPTIMUS PRIME and the AUTOBOTS struggle to muster a response to the tragedy, so the DECEPTICONS—now under the direct command of MEGATRON—begin to transform their covert strategies to date into direct action of their own...

PHASE TWO CONTINUES.



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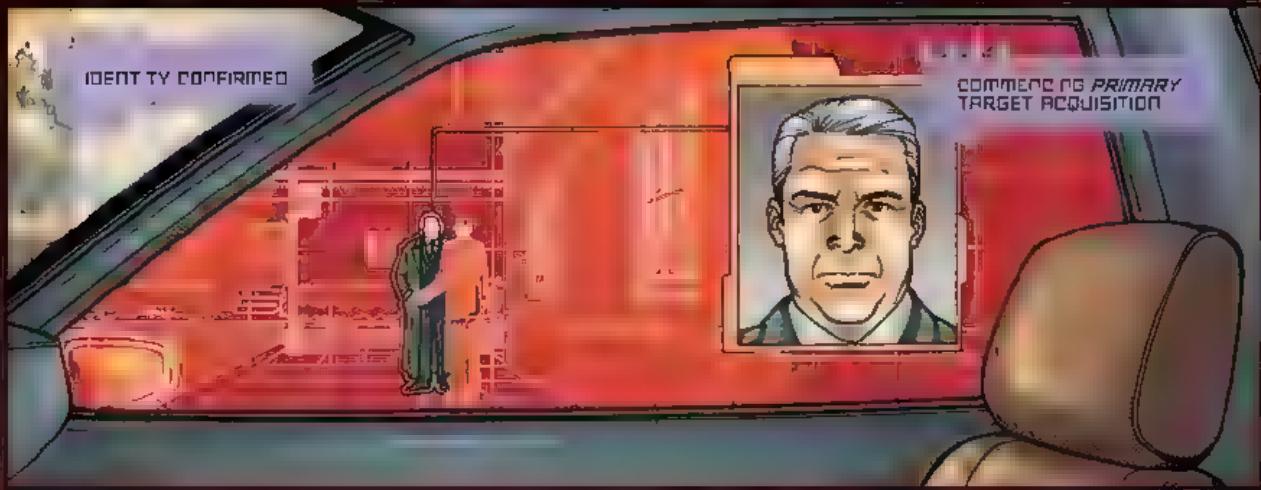
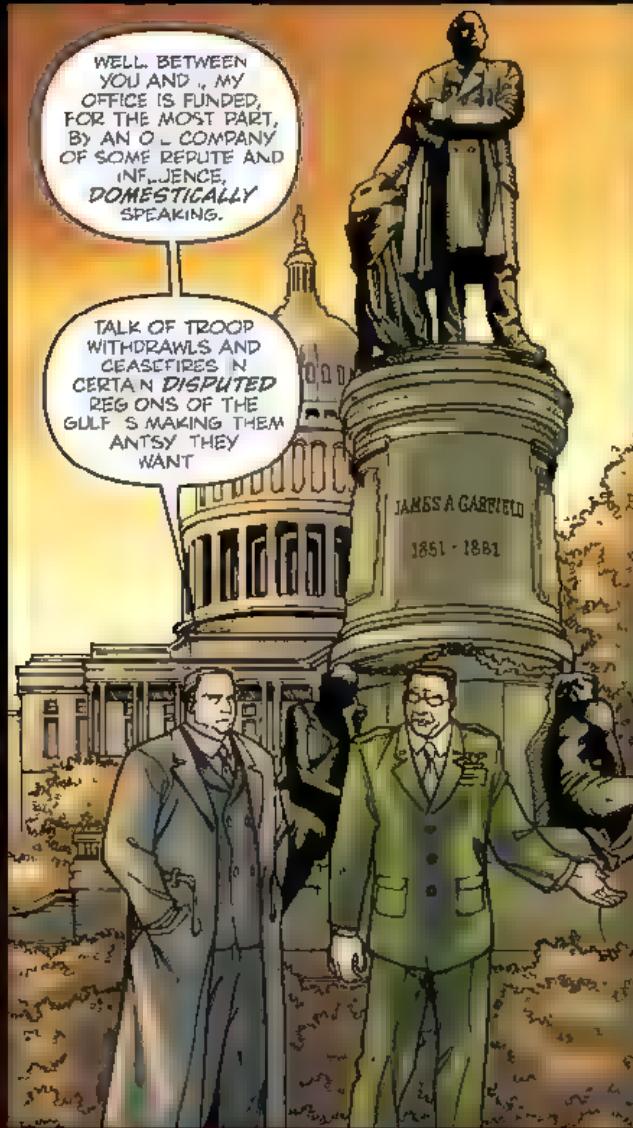
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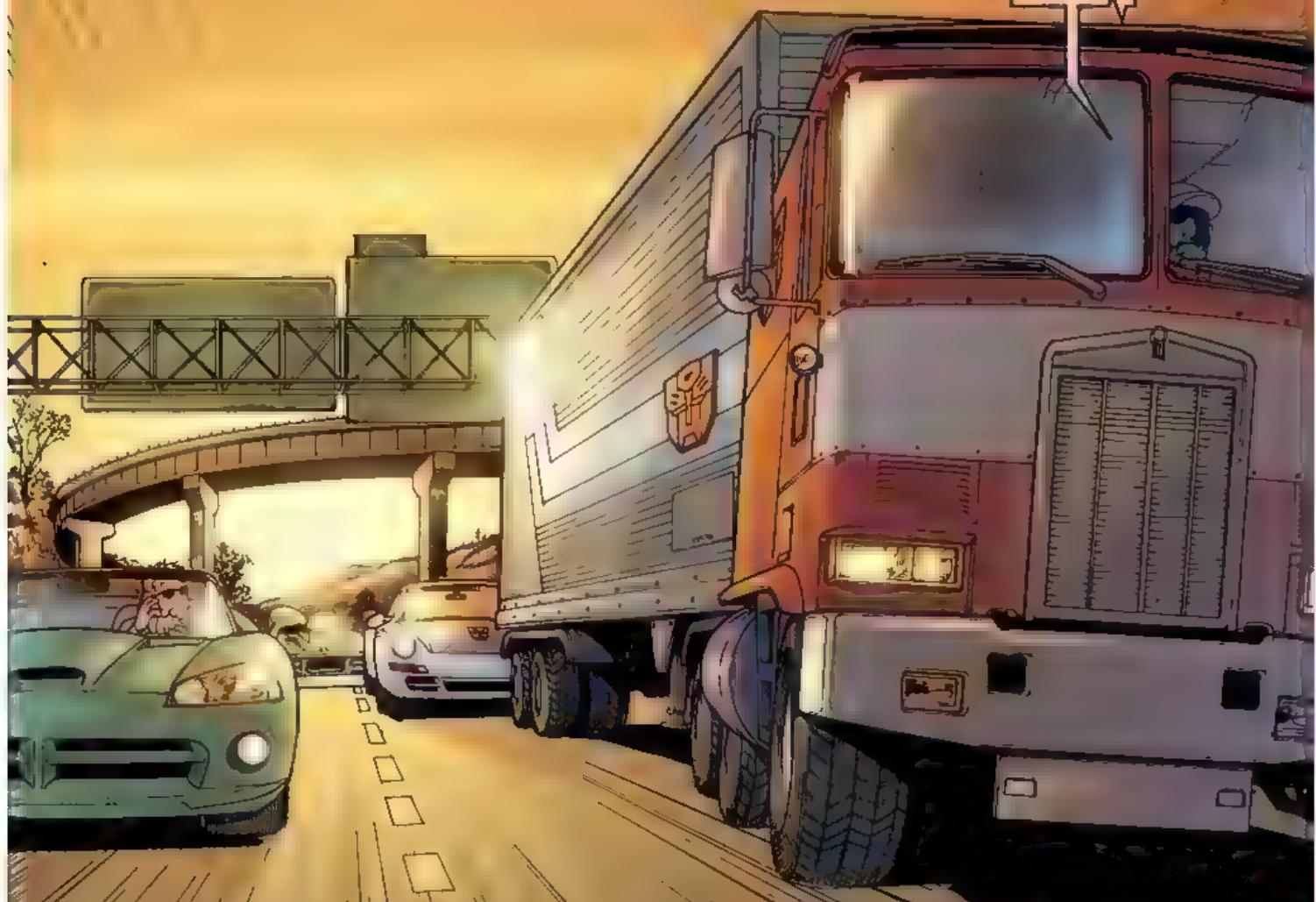


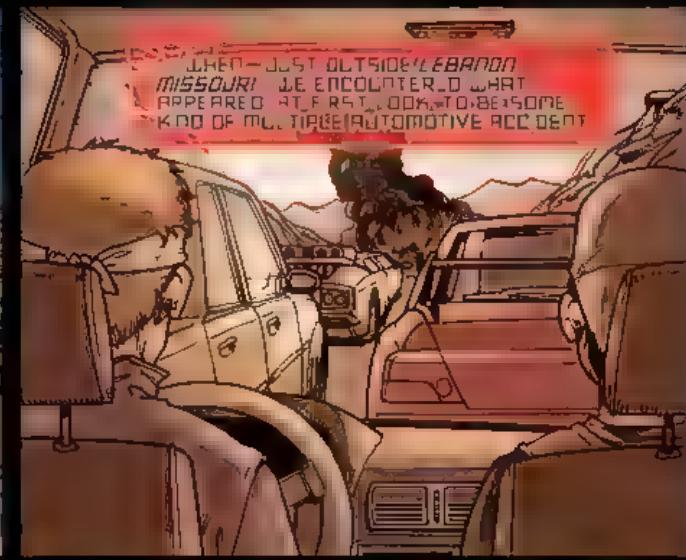
INTERSTATE I-57, JUST EAST
OF ST. LOUIS (NOW)...

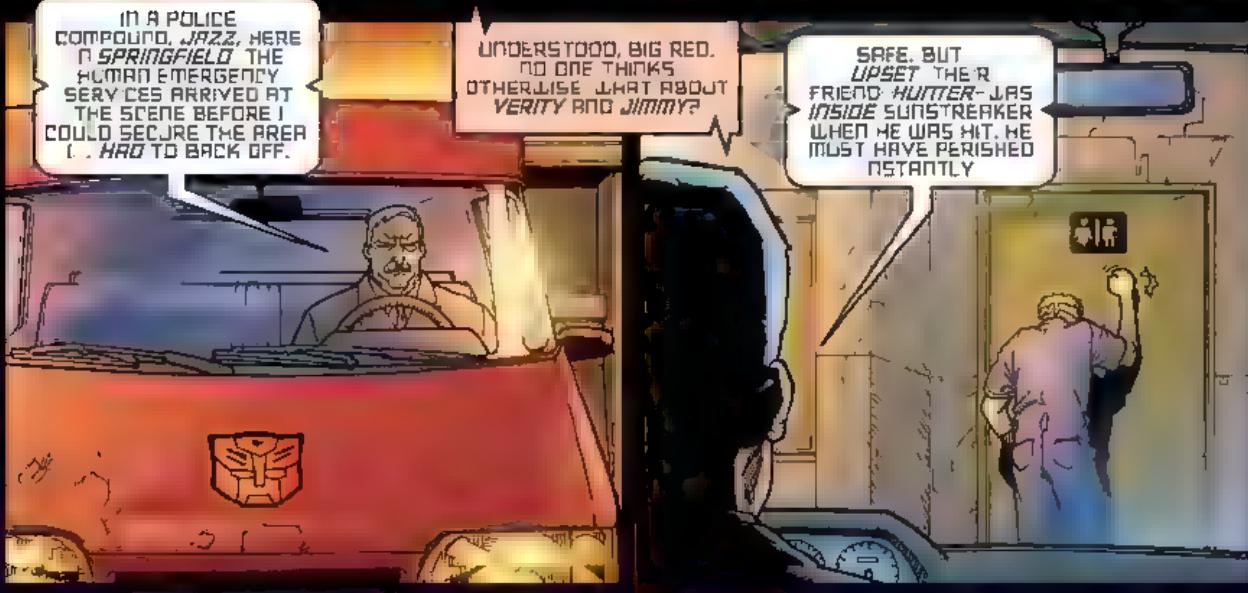
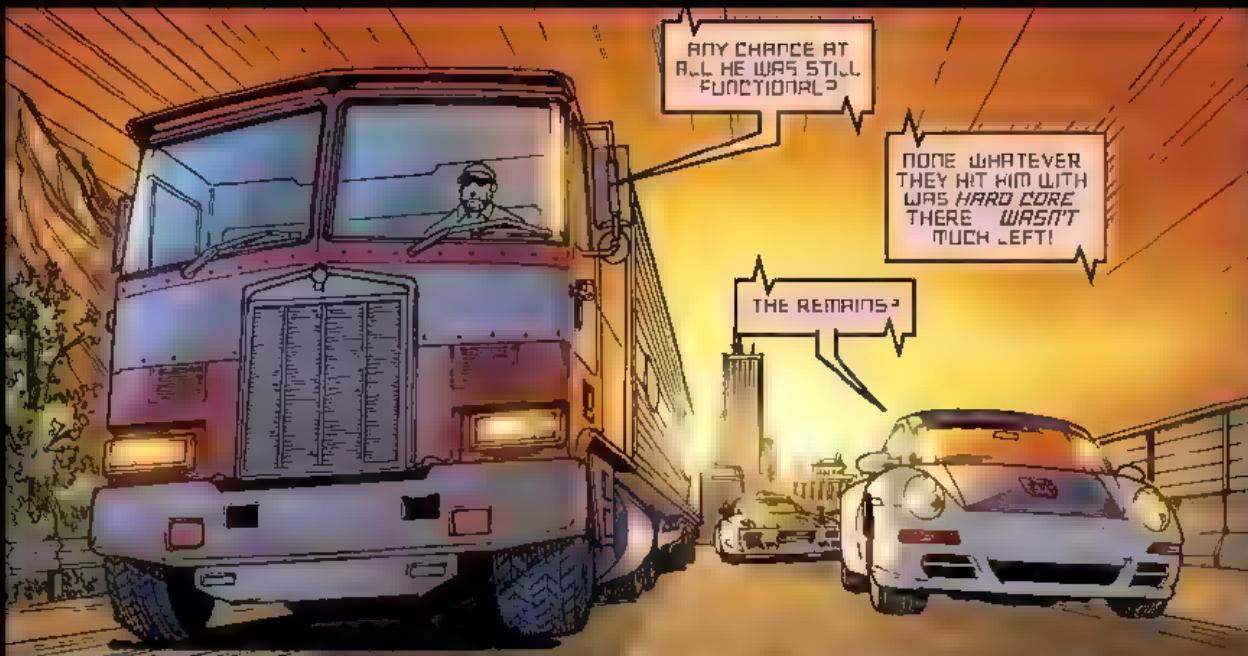
ONCE AGAIN,
IRONHIDE, FROM
THE TOP ..

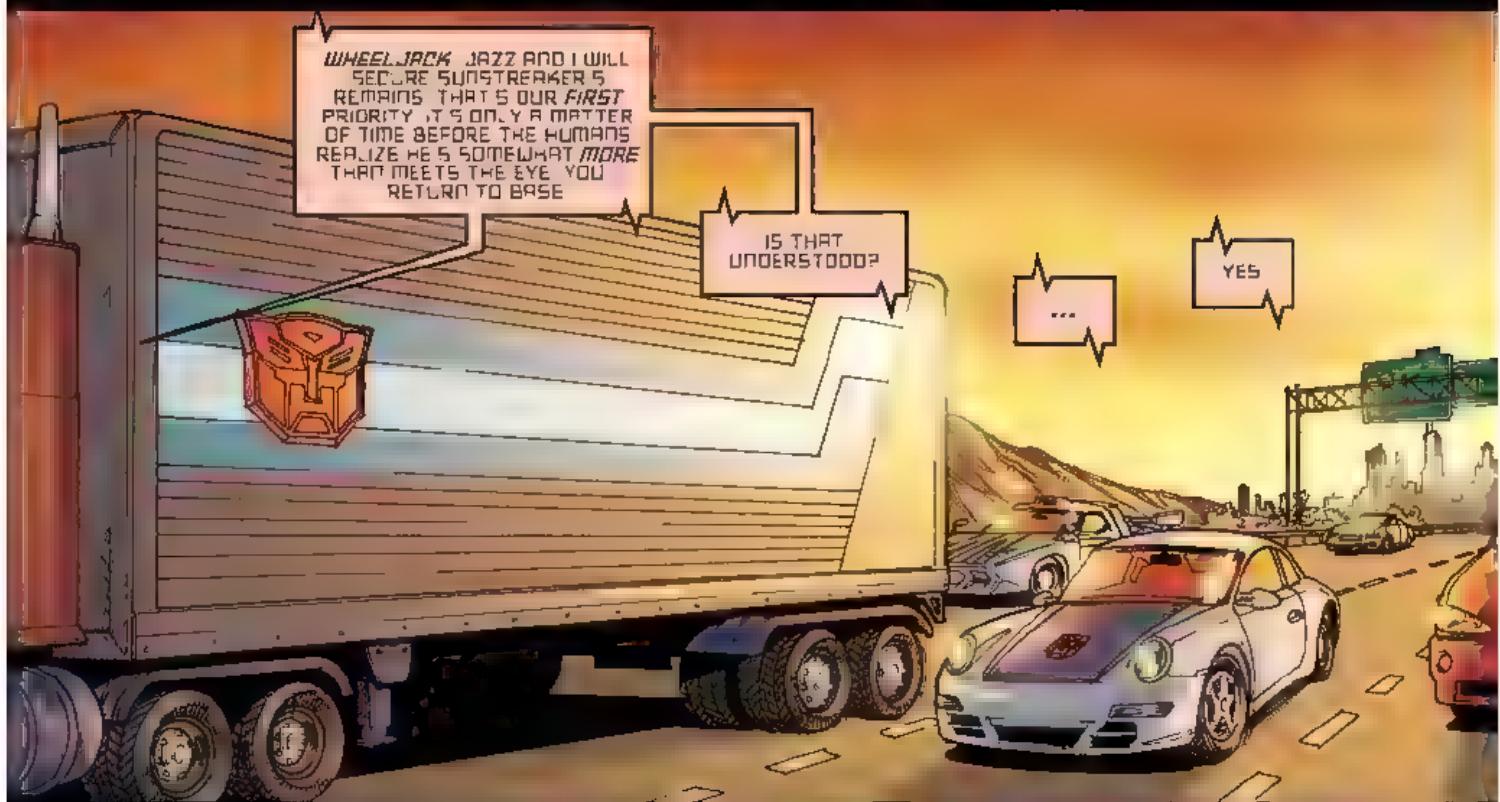
PRIME? I'M... NOT
SURE I HAVE MUCH TO
ADD TO MY ORIGINAL
REPORT, BUT IF YOU
THINK IT WILL HELP...

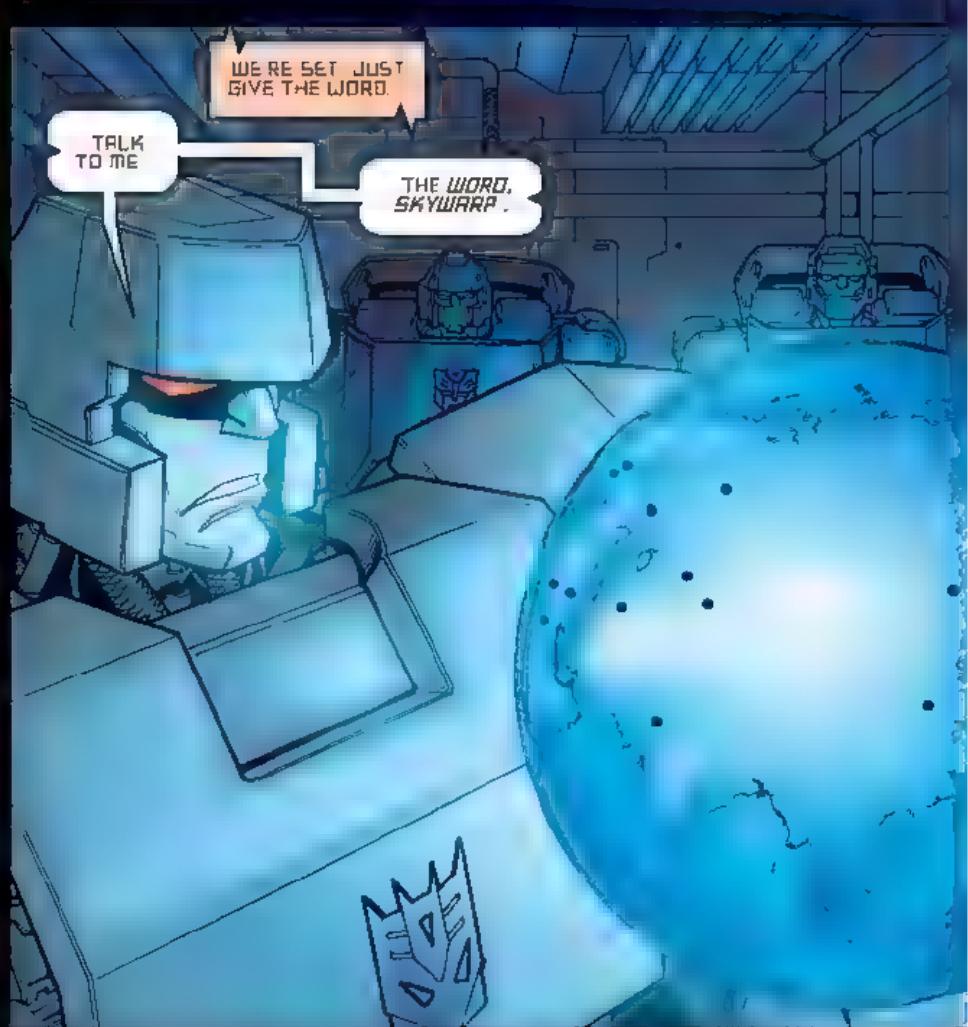
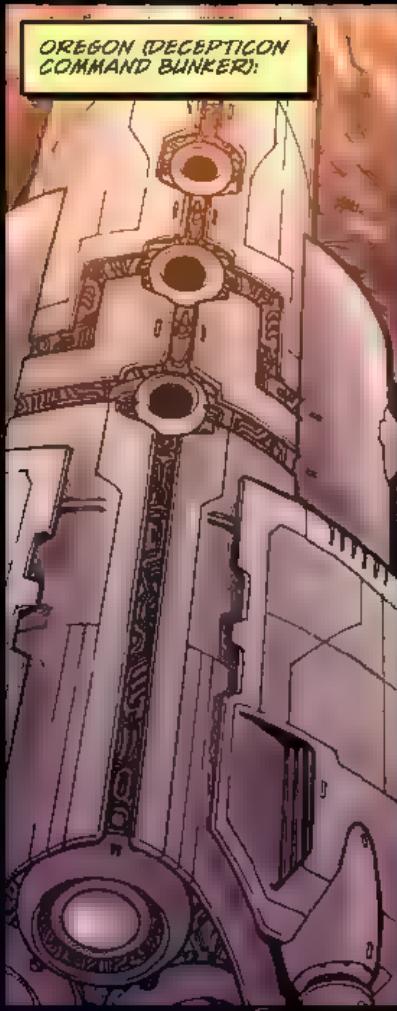
I DO











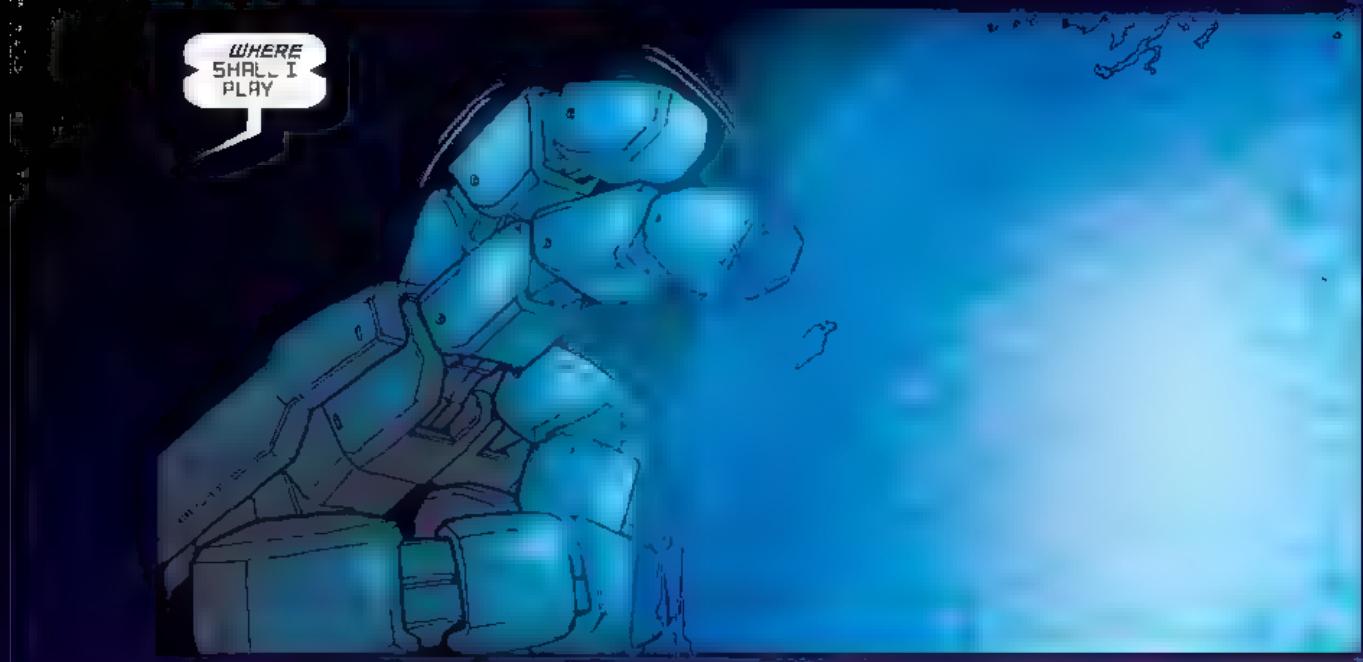
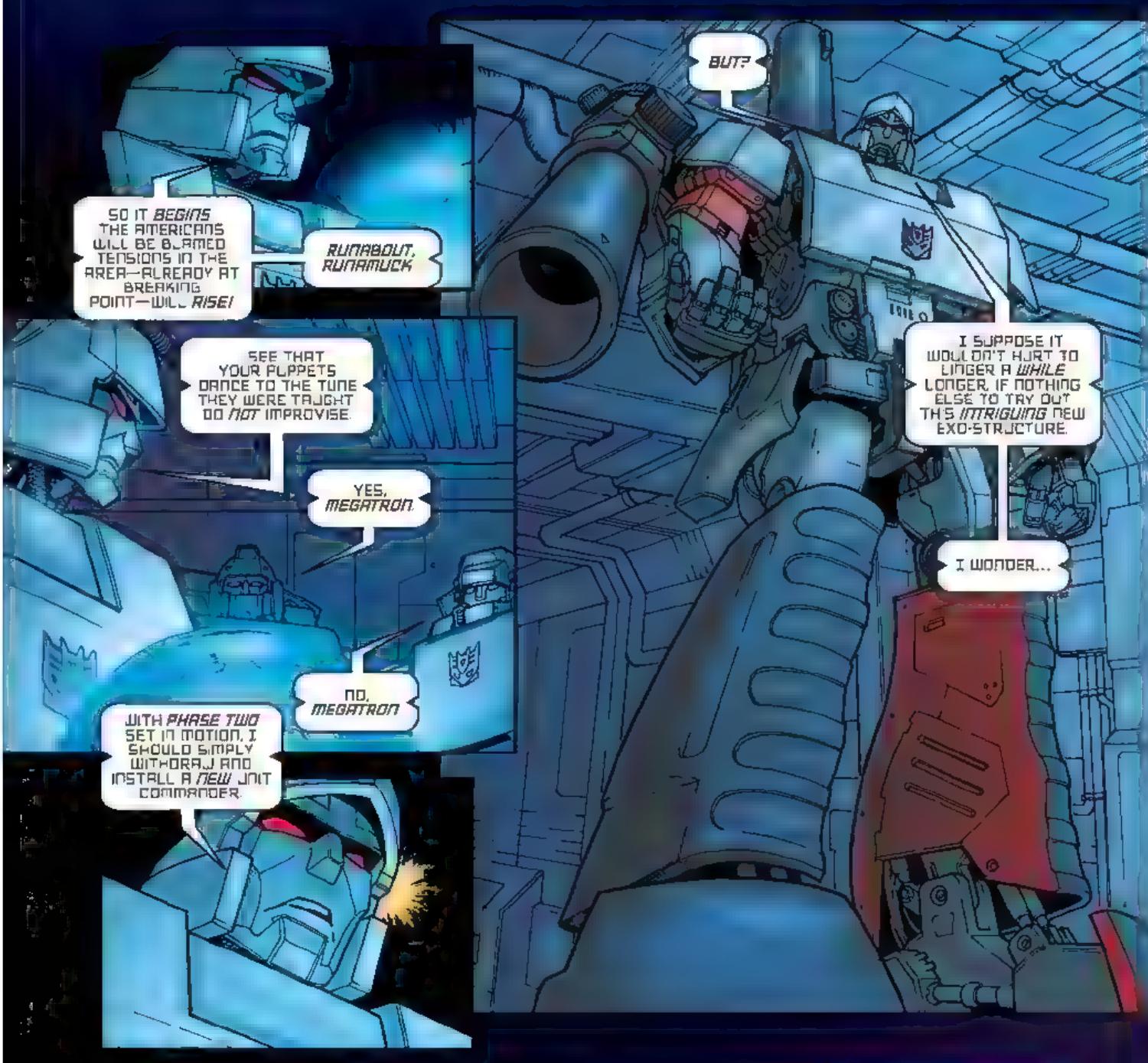
AFTER ALL, WE DID TRY TO USE HIM AS OVERALL COMMAND. YOU EVEN HAD THE GALL TO LOCK WEAPONS ON HIM! YOU'RE LUCKY HE PUT YOU IN A C.R.* CHAMBER...



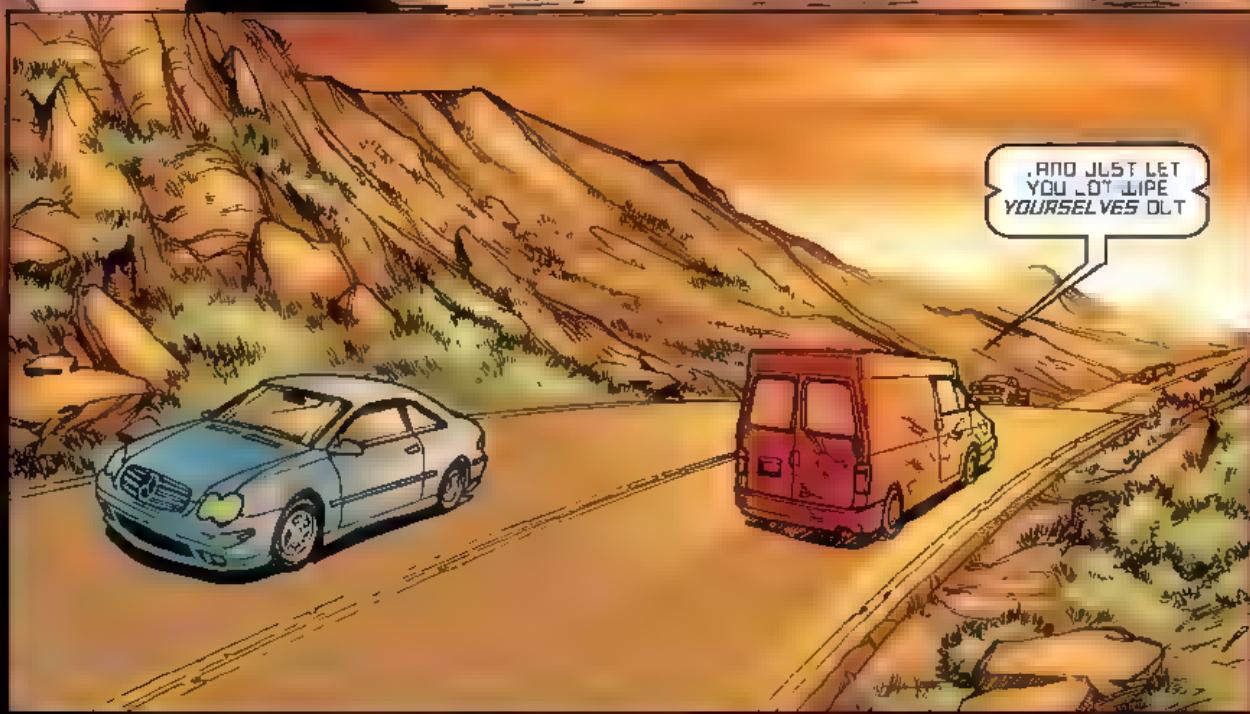
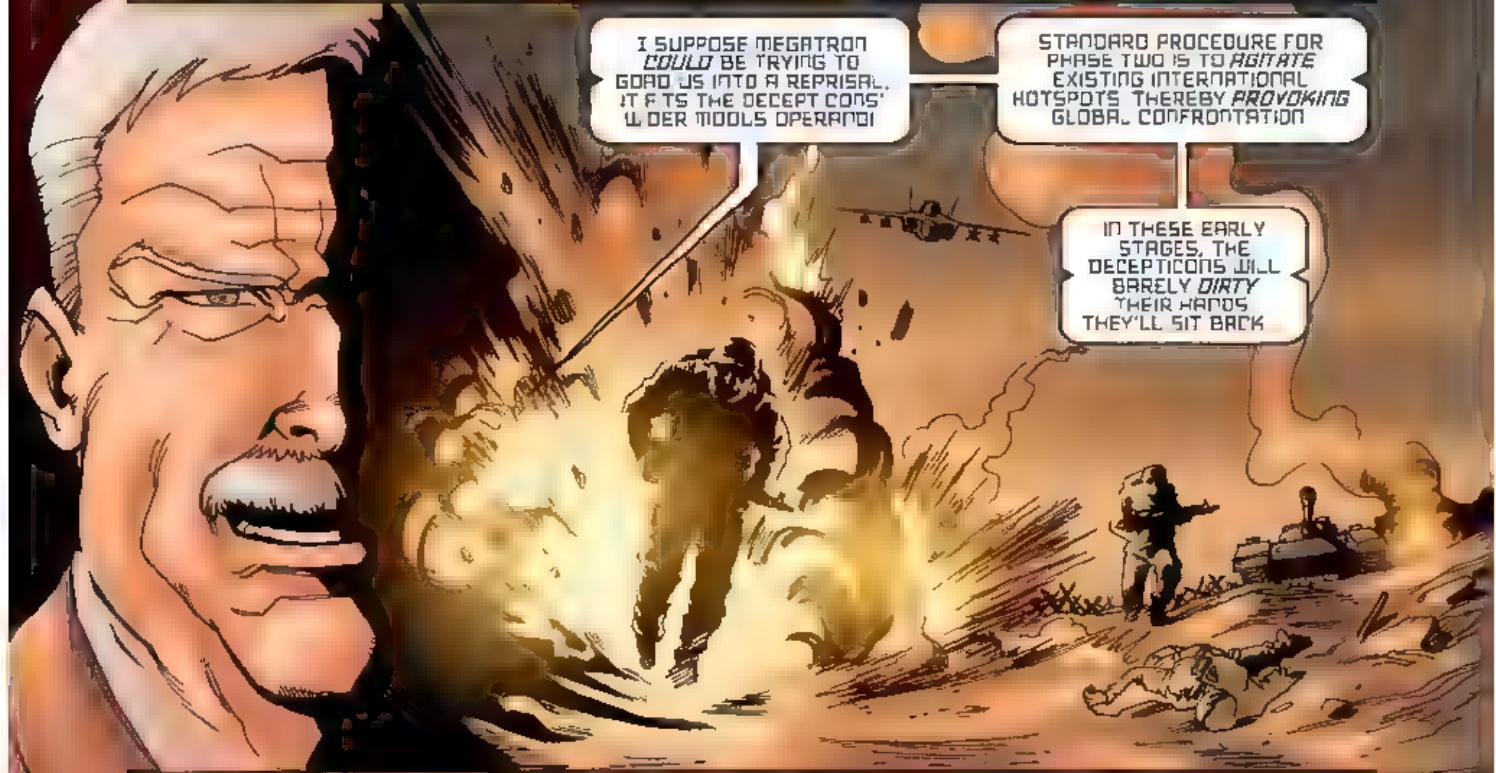
DO NOT
THE GROUND!

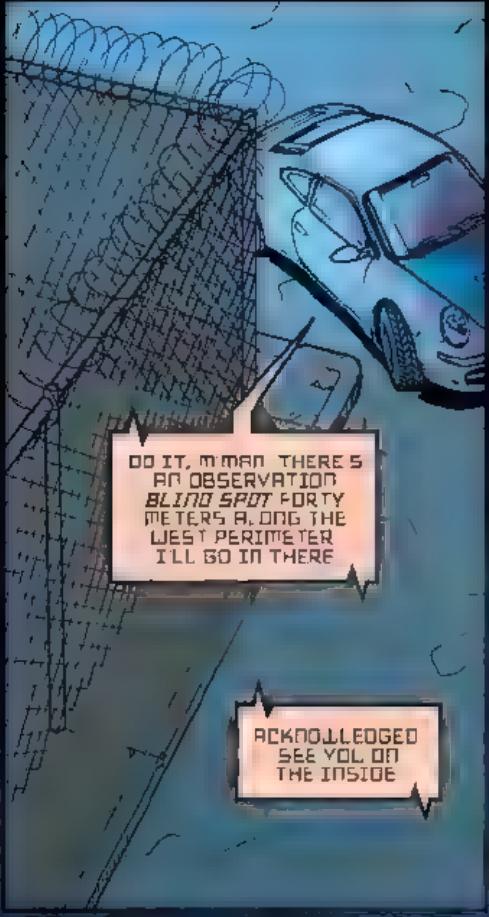
FEH COULD
BE WORSE.
I SUPPOSE

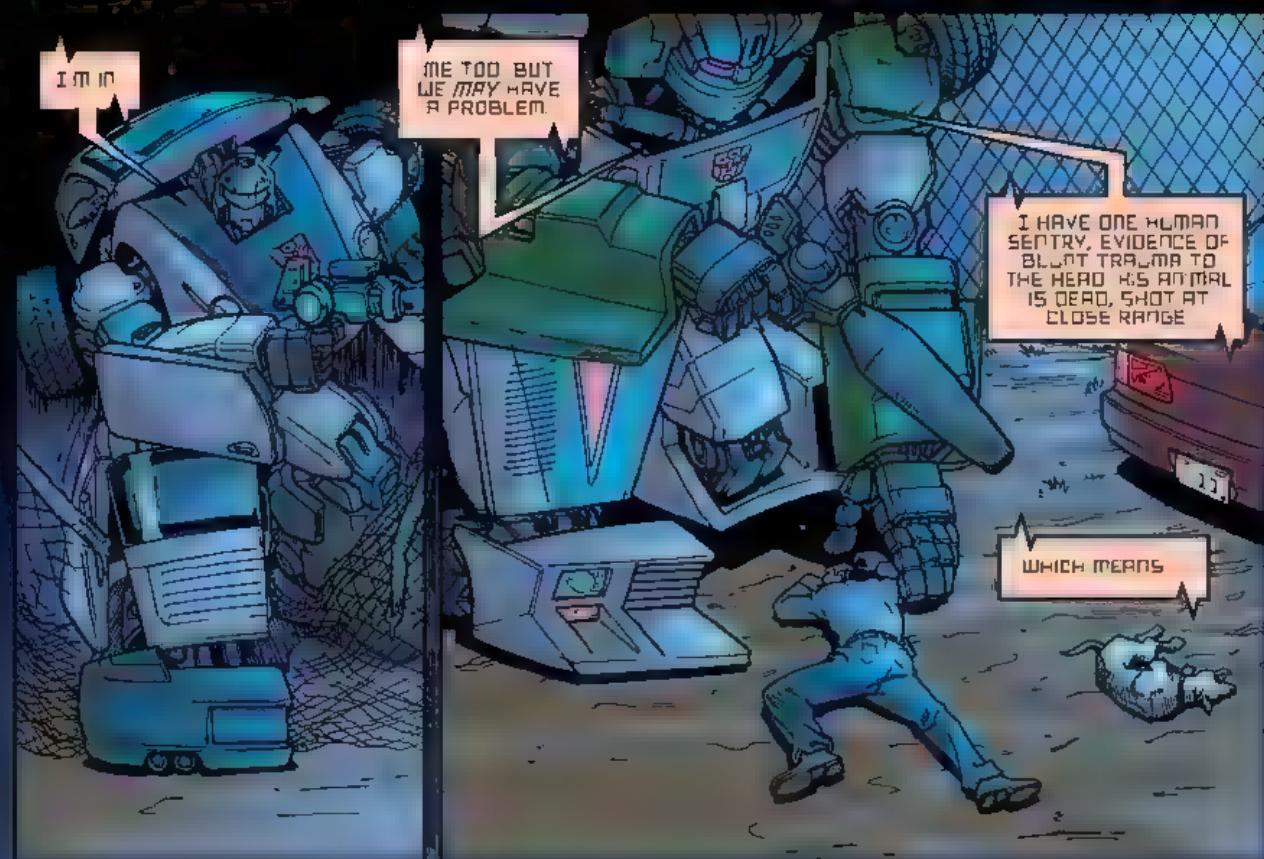
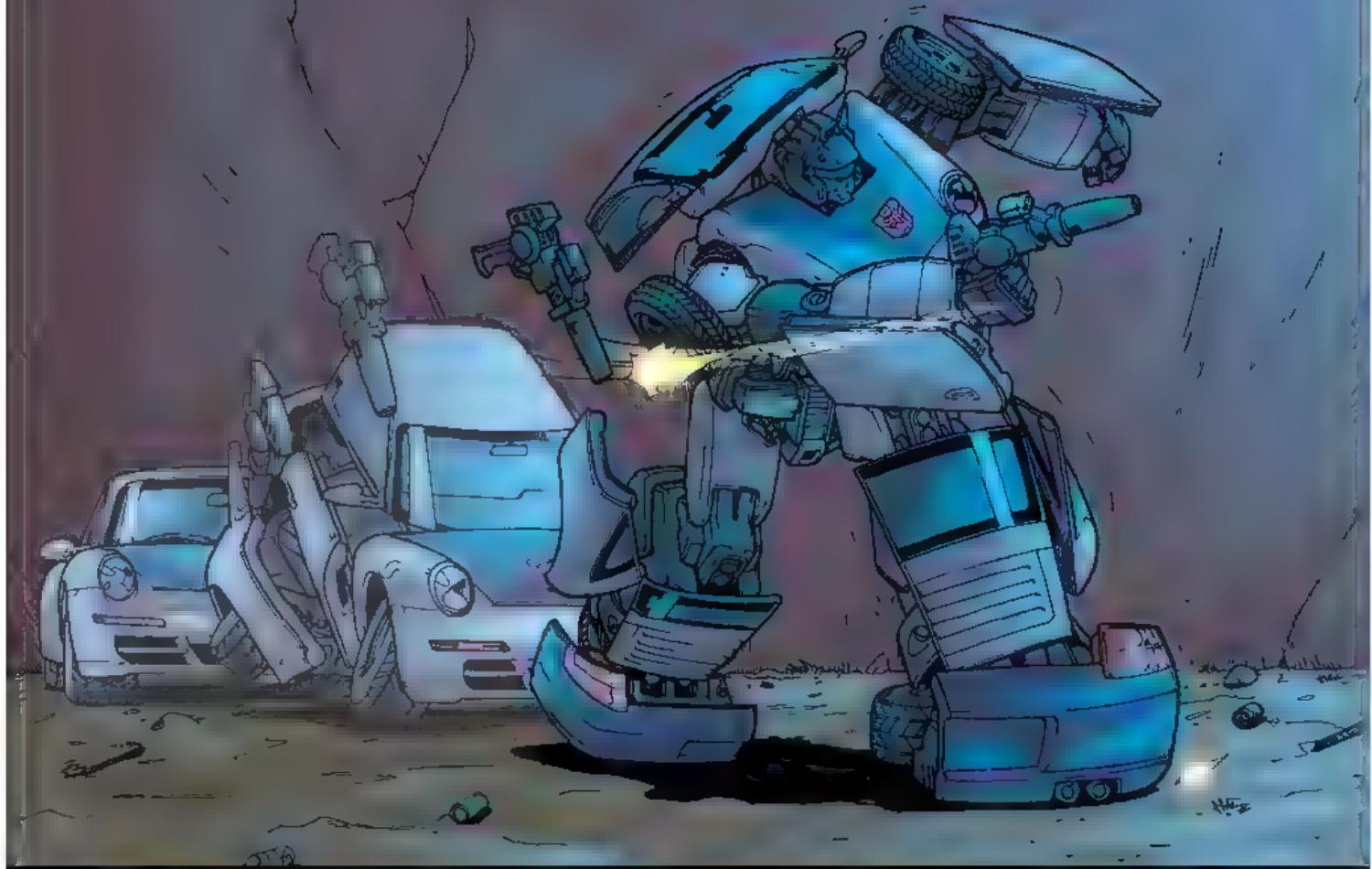
COULD BE
STARScream



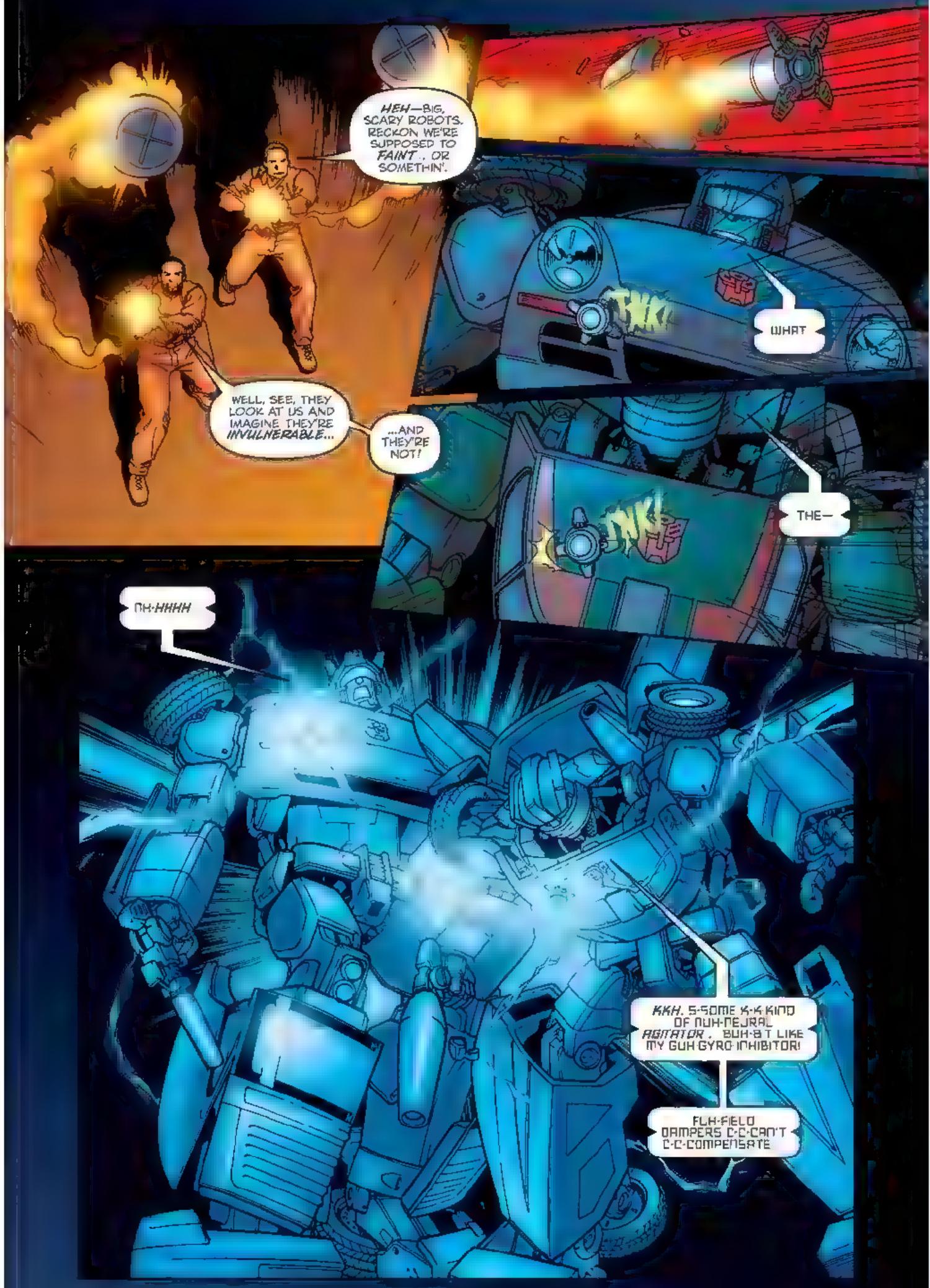


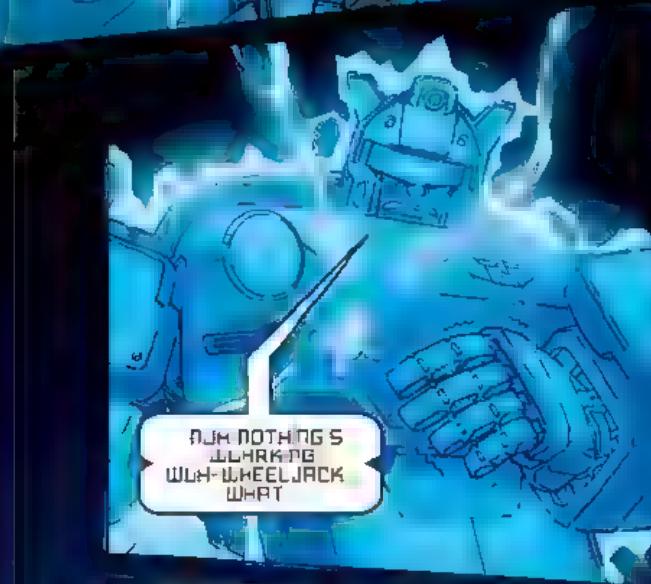


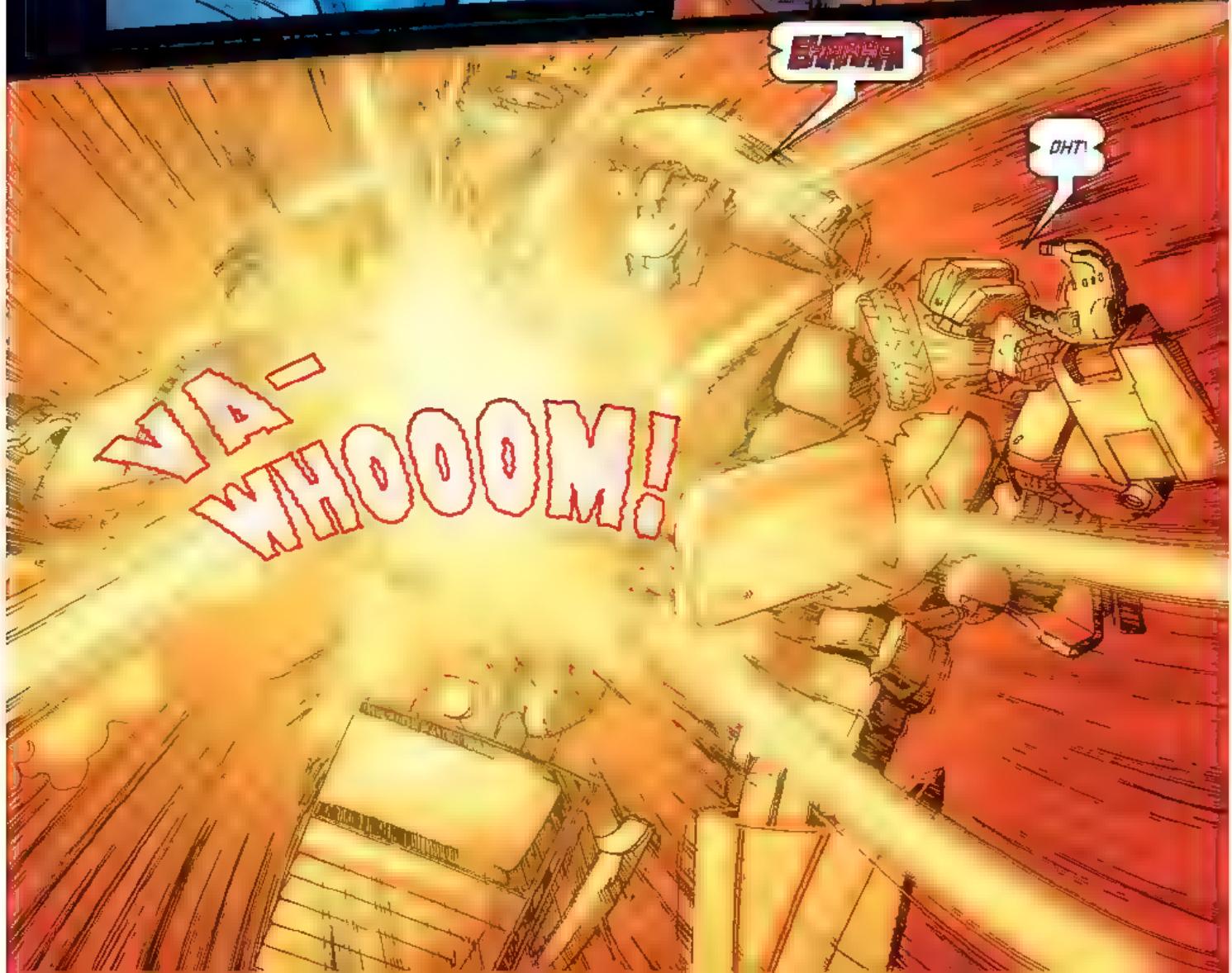


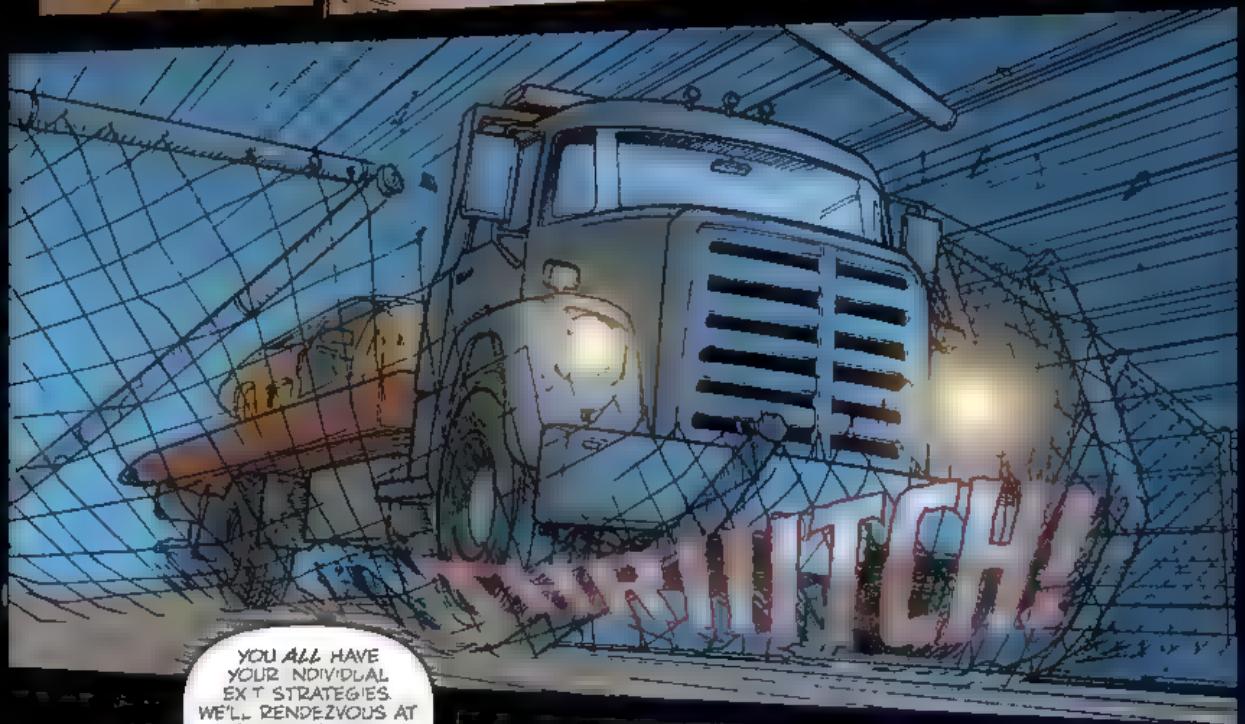




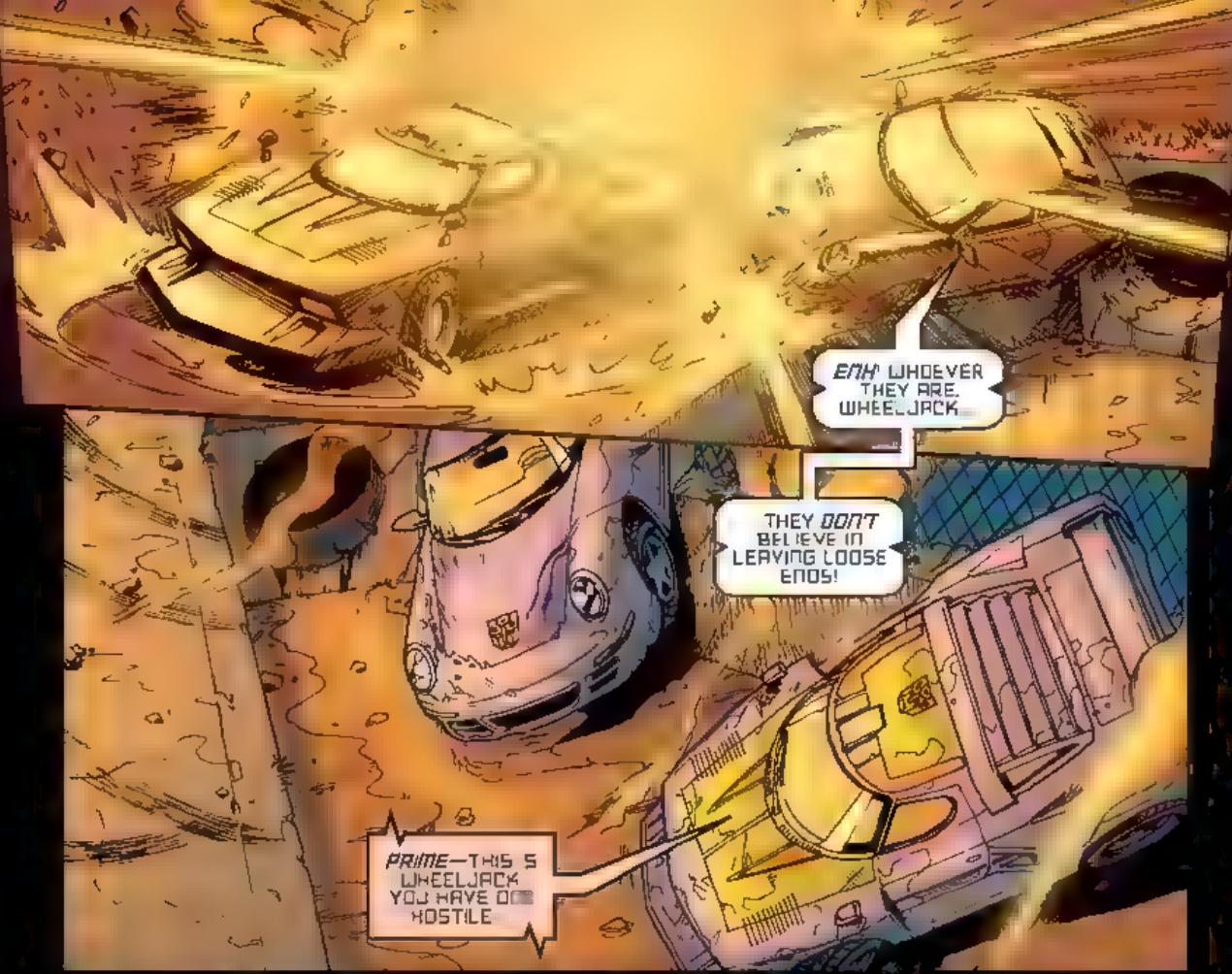


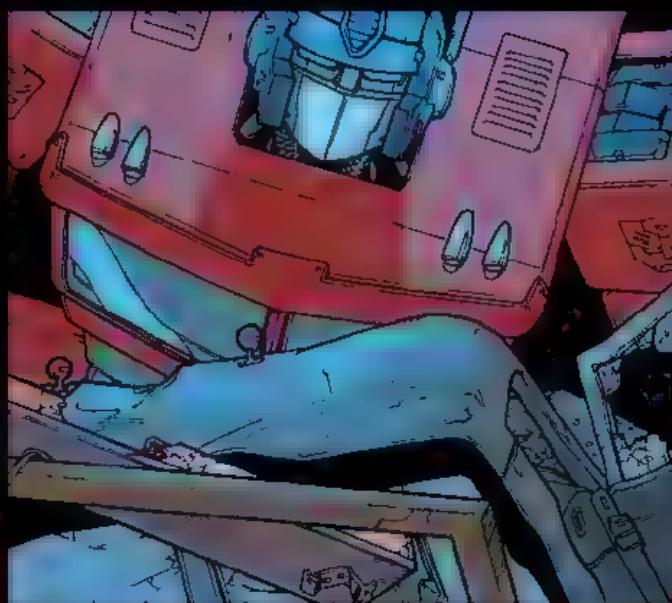
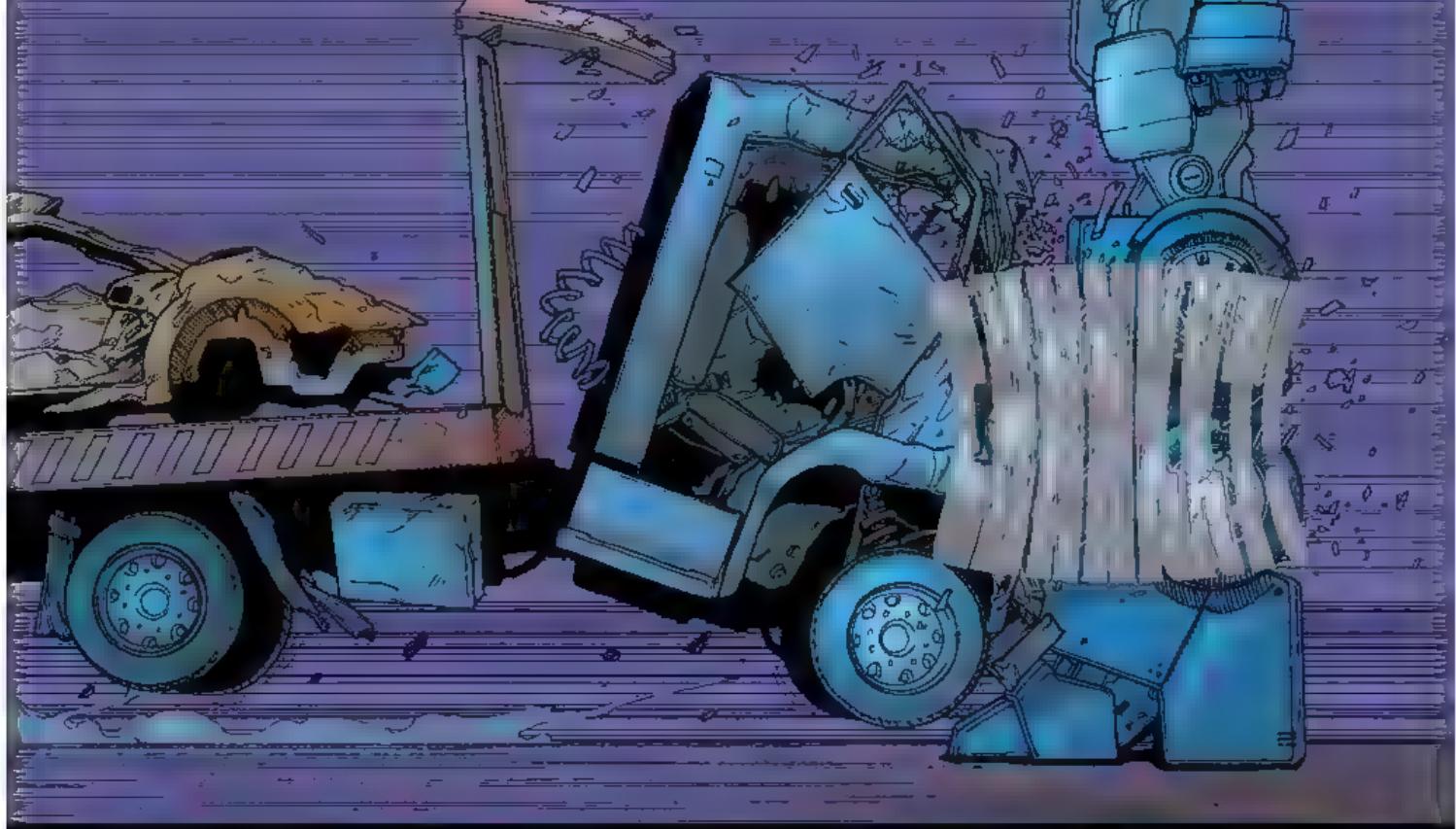


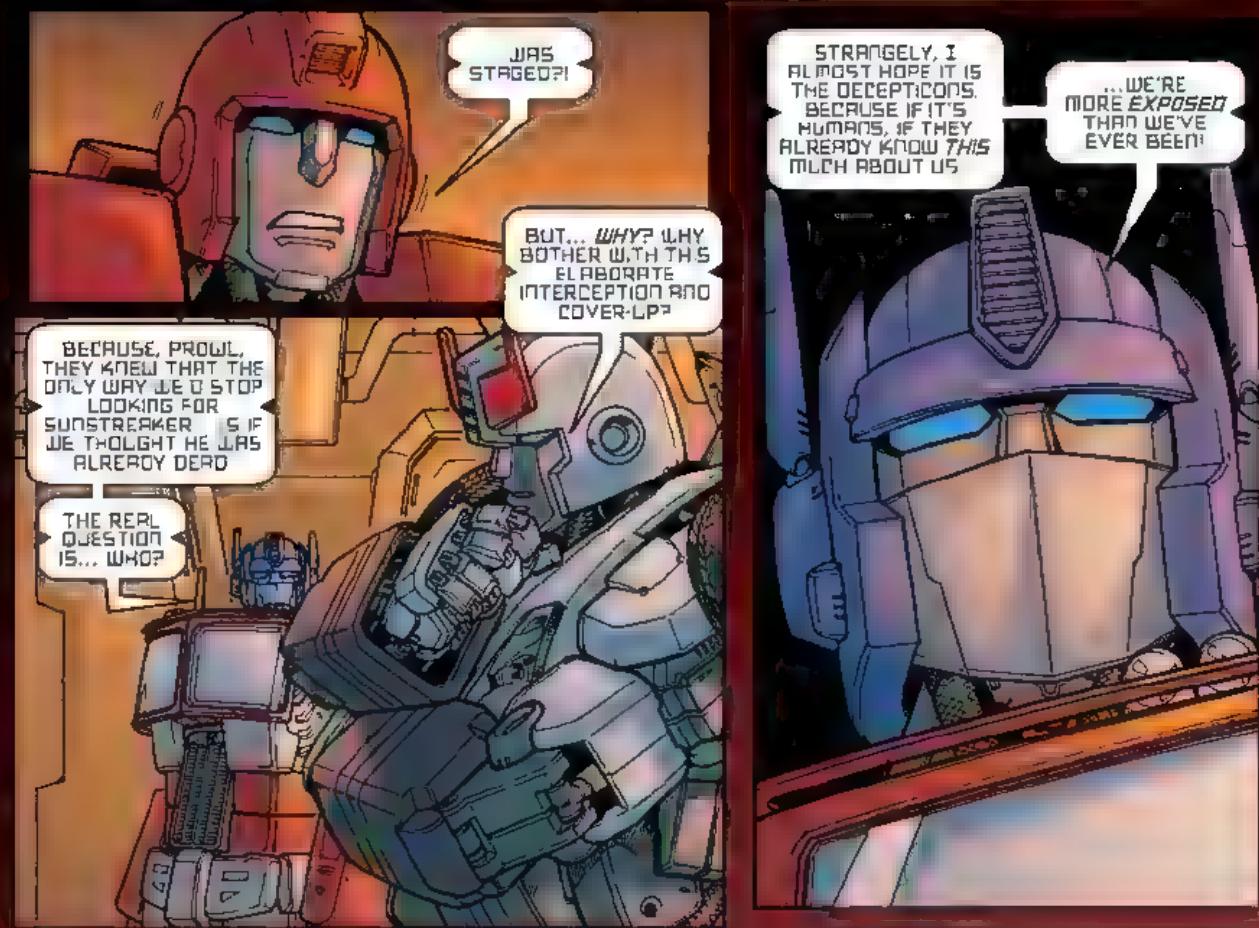
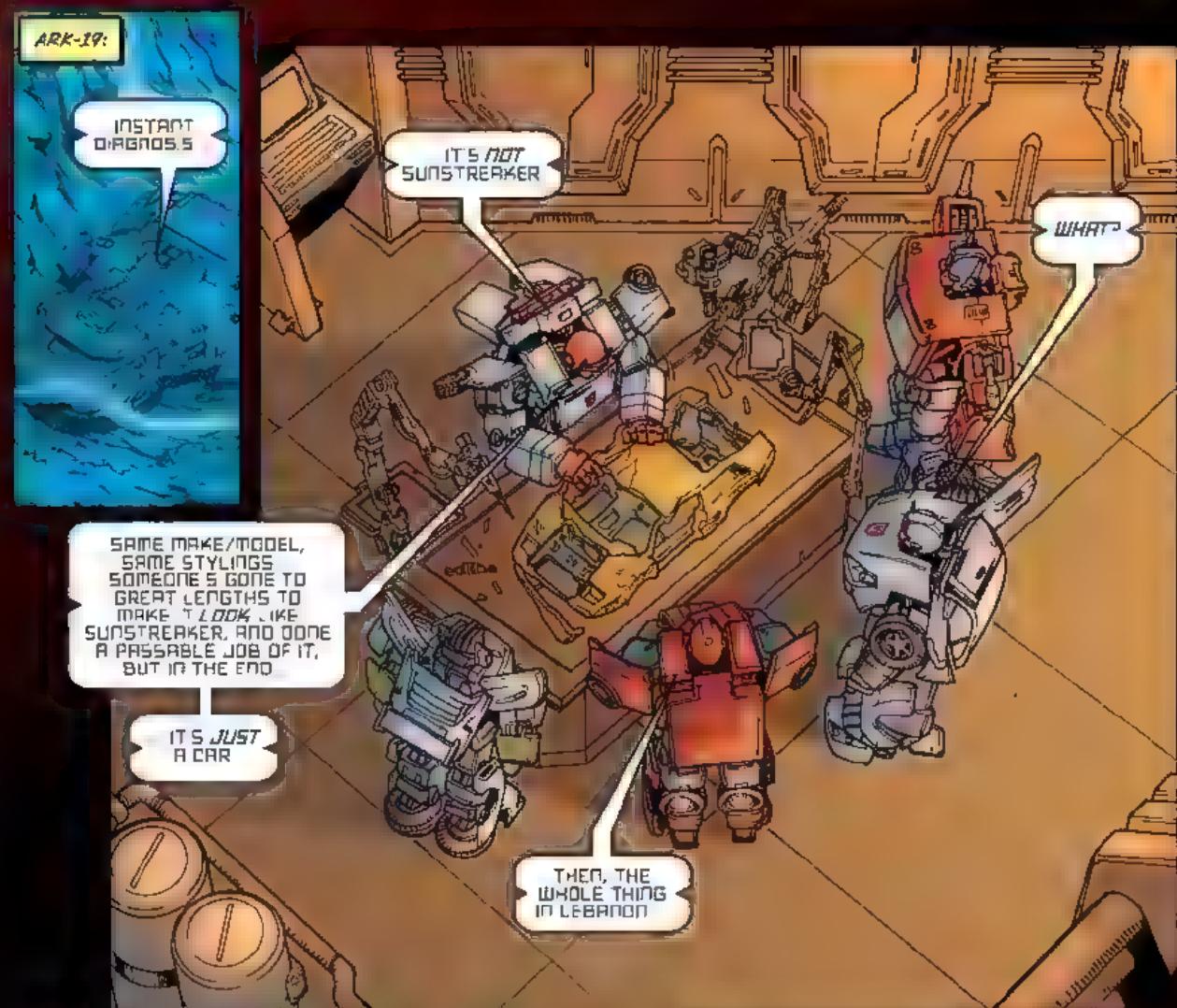


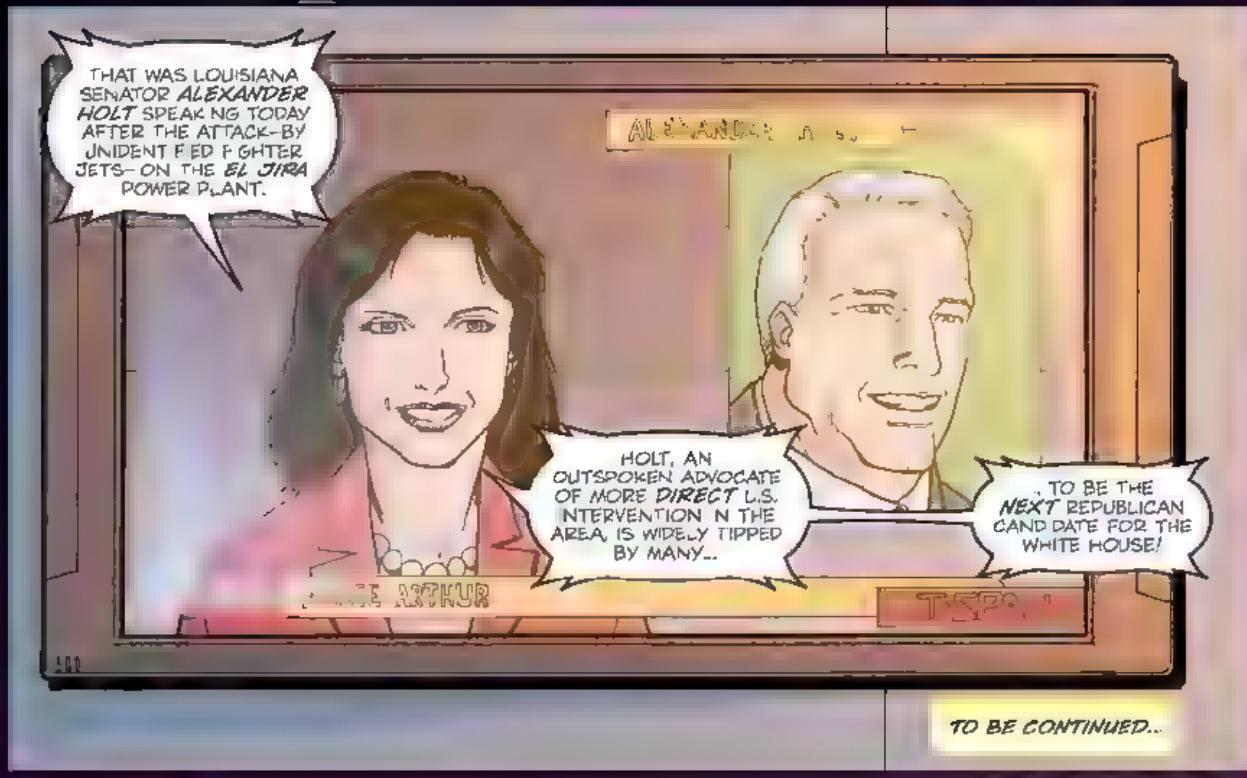














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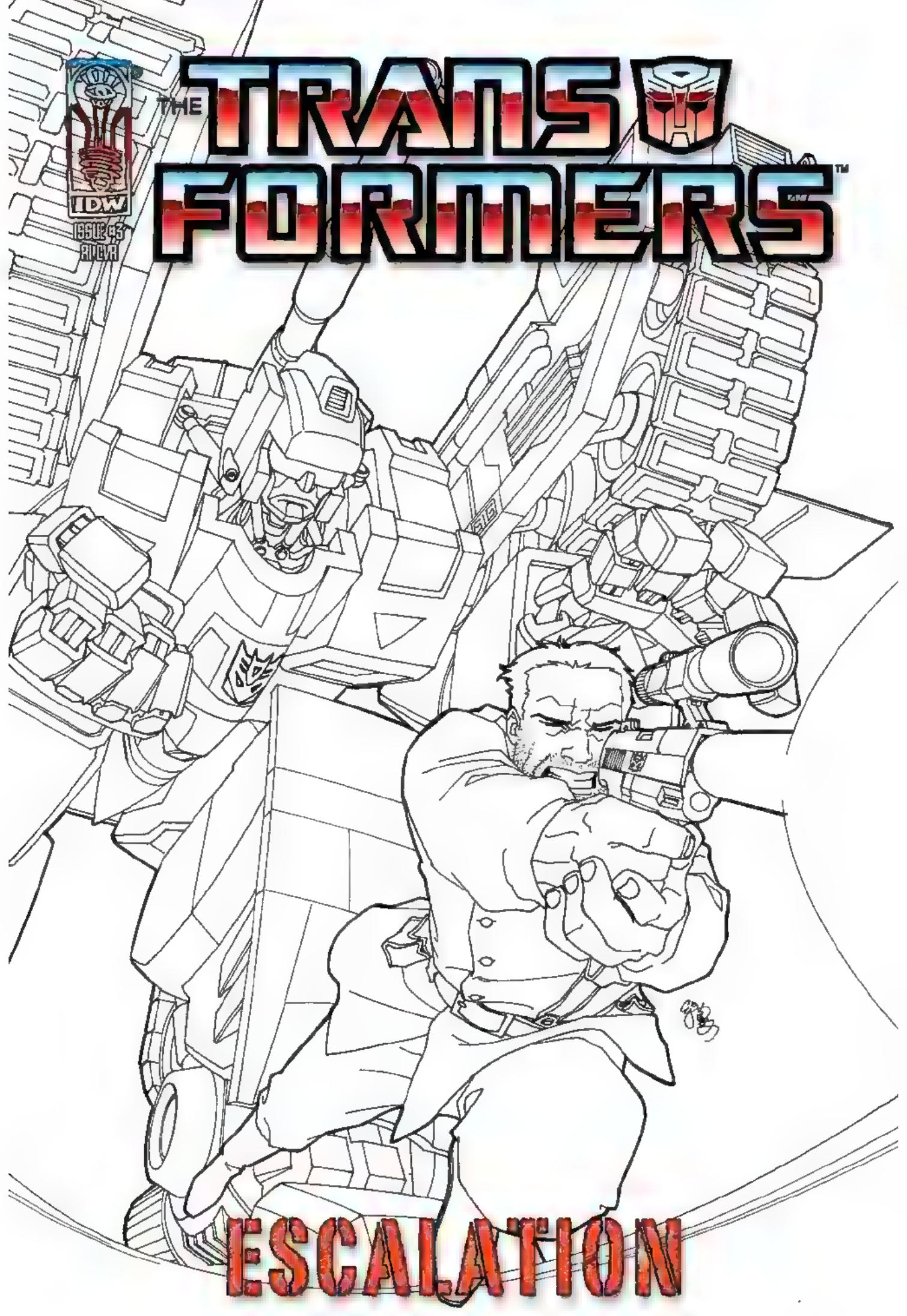


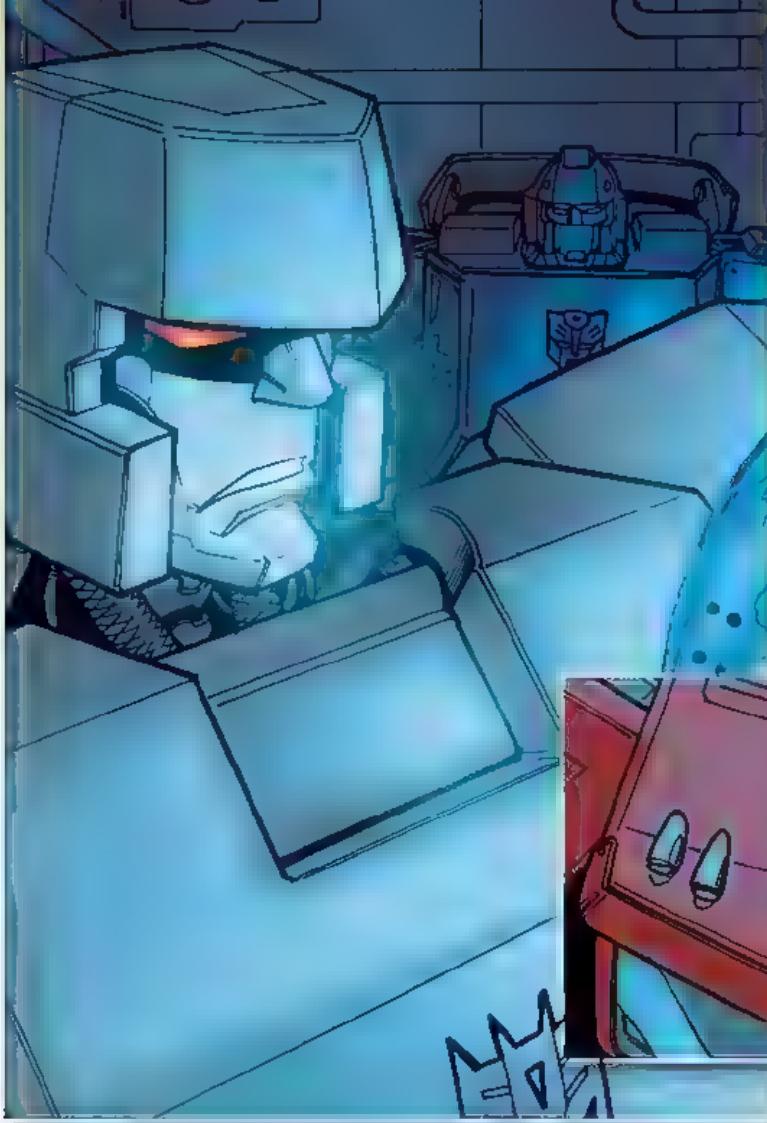
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ISSUE NUMBER THREE

ESCALATION

As the AUTOBOTS begin to probe the mysterious abduction (and fate) of SLINSTREAKER and his passenger Hunter O'Nion, MEGATRON gets hands-on with the escalating DECEPTICON infiltration strategy on Earth. Having upgraded to an immensely powerful new Earth form, MEGATRON sets his sights on the breakaway soviet state of Brasnya and one of the many facsimile (artificial) humans carefully integrated into that particular hot spot. Things.. are about to go ballistic!

PHASE TWO CONTINUES...



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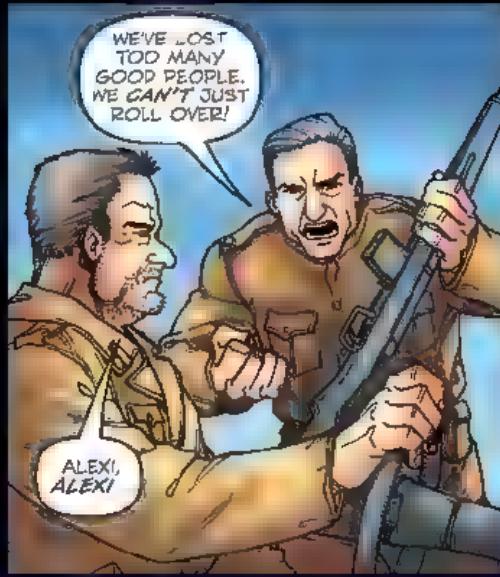
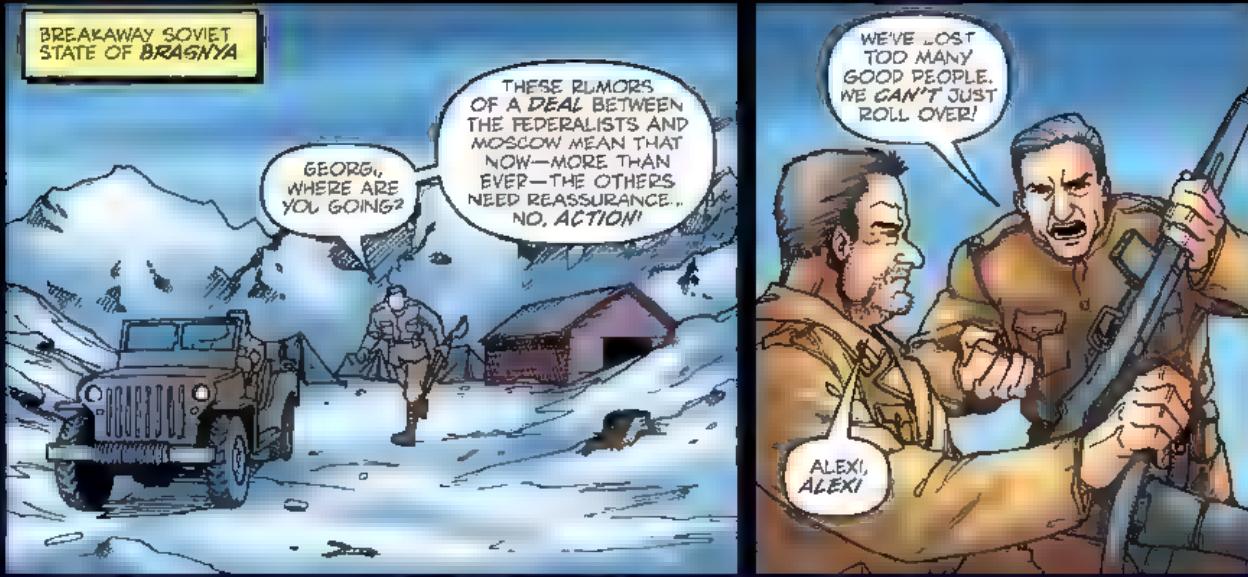
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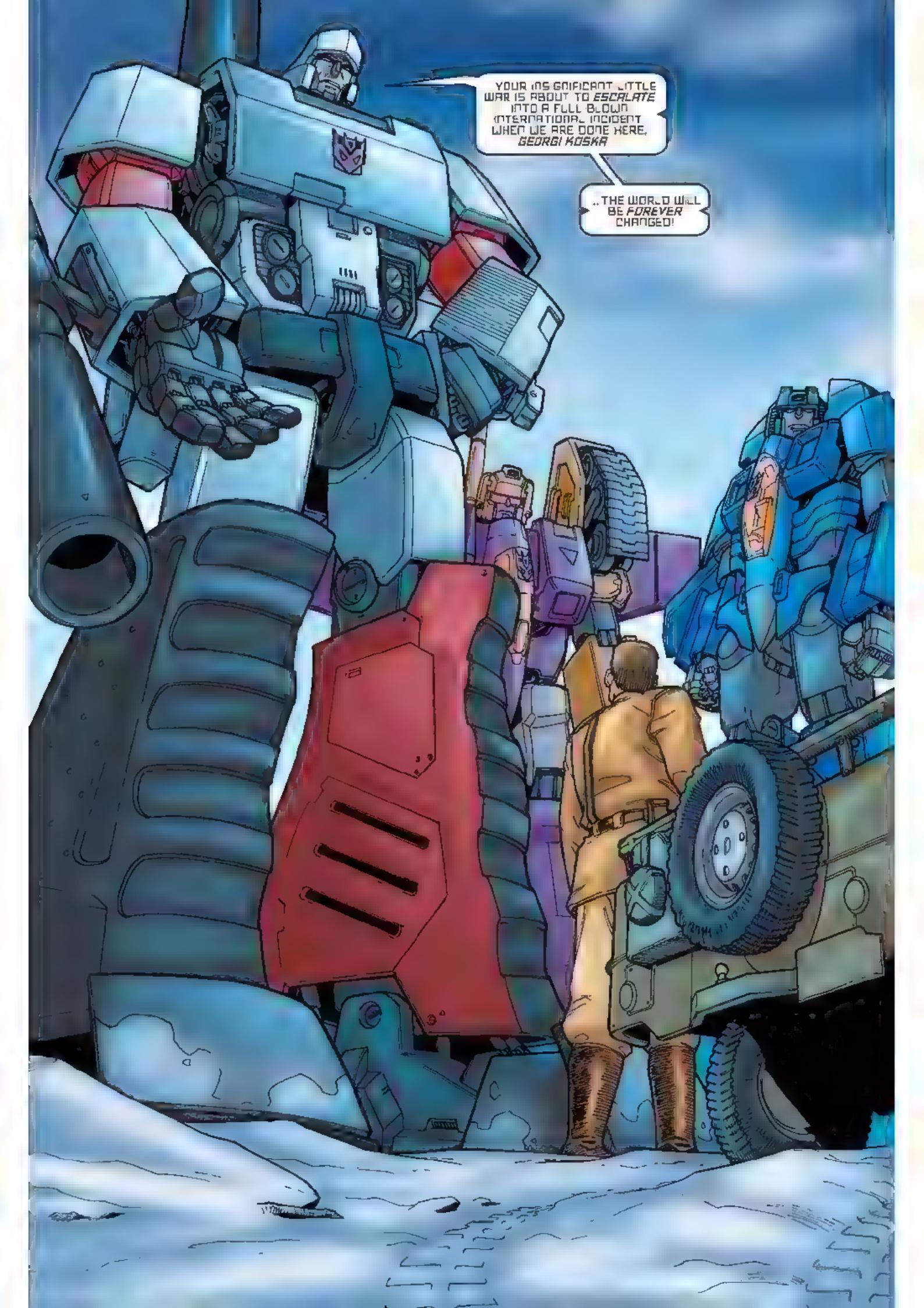
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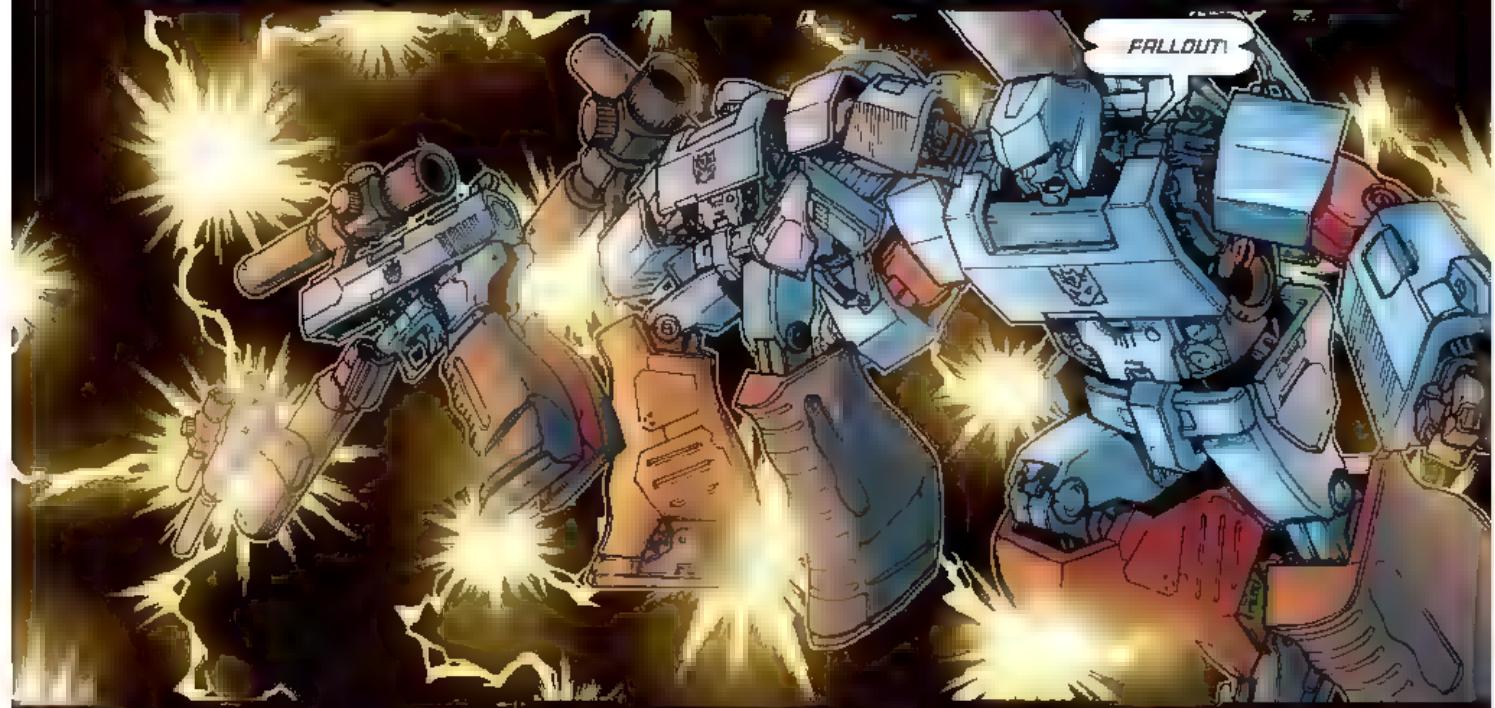


YOUR INSIGNIFICANT LITTLE WAR IS ABOUT TO ESCALATE
INTO A FULL BLOWN
INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT
WHEN WE ARE DONE HERE.
GEORGI KOSKA

..THE WORLD WILL
BE FOREVER
CHANGED!



IS NOT
WITHOUT
SOME



KOSKA. THOUGH YOU ARE
HUMAN IN APPEARANCE
ALONE, YOU HAVE THE
UNPRECEDENTED HONOR



OF WIELDING
THE GALAXY'S
GREATEST
LIVING WEAPON



THERE WITH THEIR
PRIMARY OIL SUPPLY
LINE SEVERED, THE
SOVIETS WILL NOT
BE LONG IN
INVESTIGATING

KOSKA—
GATHER YOUR
REBEL FORCE



SKYLARP—MAKE
YOURSELF SCARCE
BLITZWING

ENGAGE
CHAMELEON-MESH

ARK-19 (LAKE MICHIGAN):

REINFORCEMENTS?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND SURE, THE STAKES ARE HIGHER, THE OPPORTUNITY A LOT TOUGHER, BUT WITH YOU HERE, WE CAN HANDLE THIS

I DISAGREE

THIS IS NOT A REFLECTION ON YOUR COMMAND, PROWL EARTH HAS SIMPLY GRADUATED FROM PERIPHERAL TO PIVOTAL. ONE FALSE MOVE FROM HEREOF IN

AND WE MIGHT ALL PAY THE PRICE!

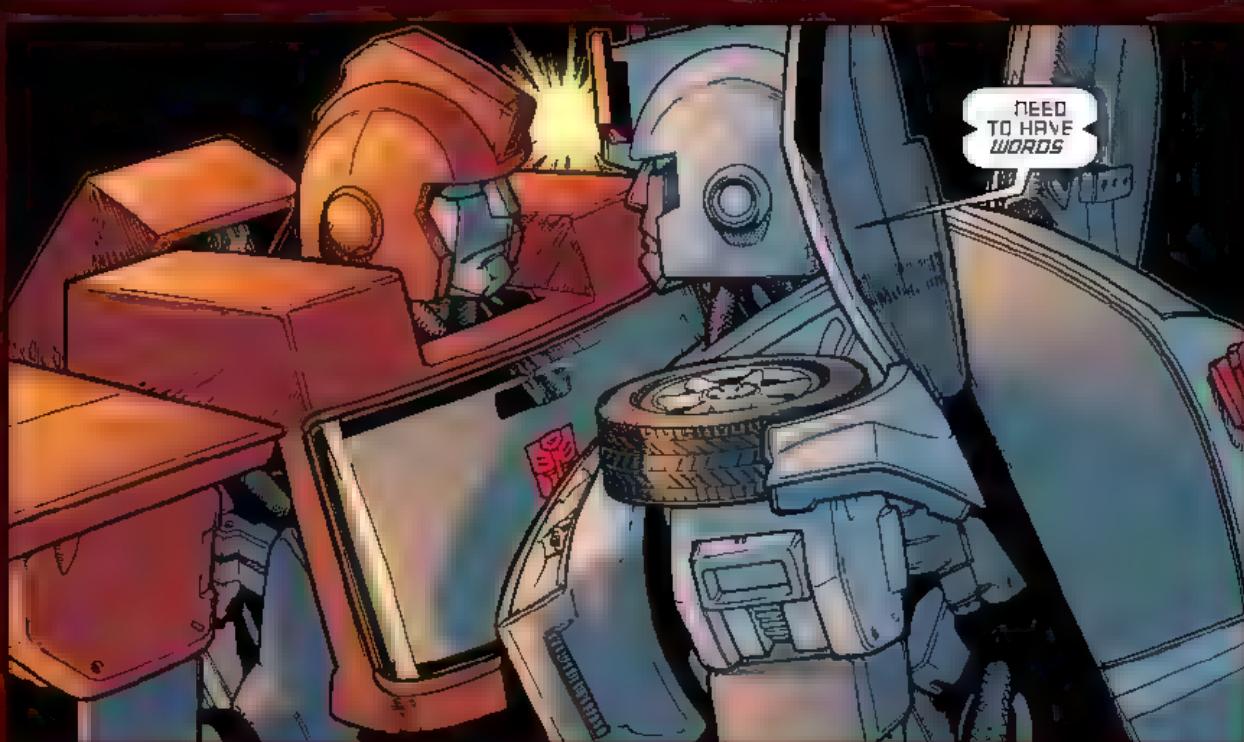
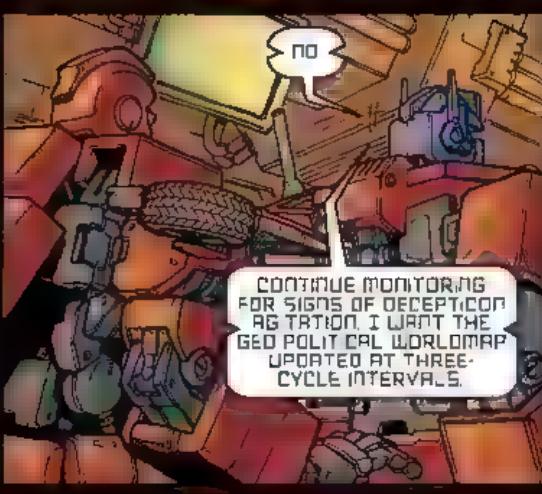
BUT

IT'S ALREADY DONE. WITH MEGATRON ACTIVE ON EARTH AND SUNSTREAKER MIA, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO PULL RESOURCES FROM ELSEWHERE

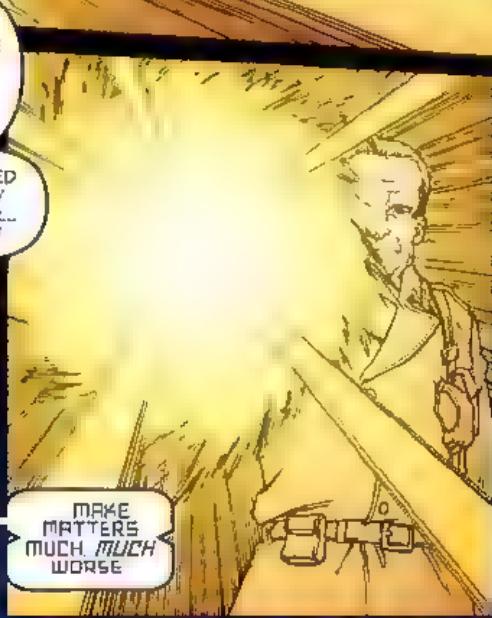
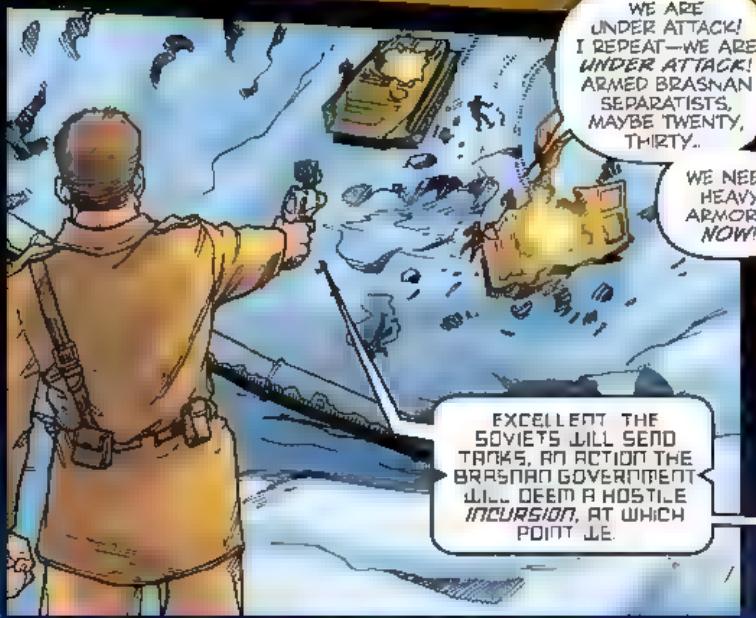
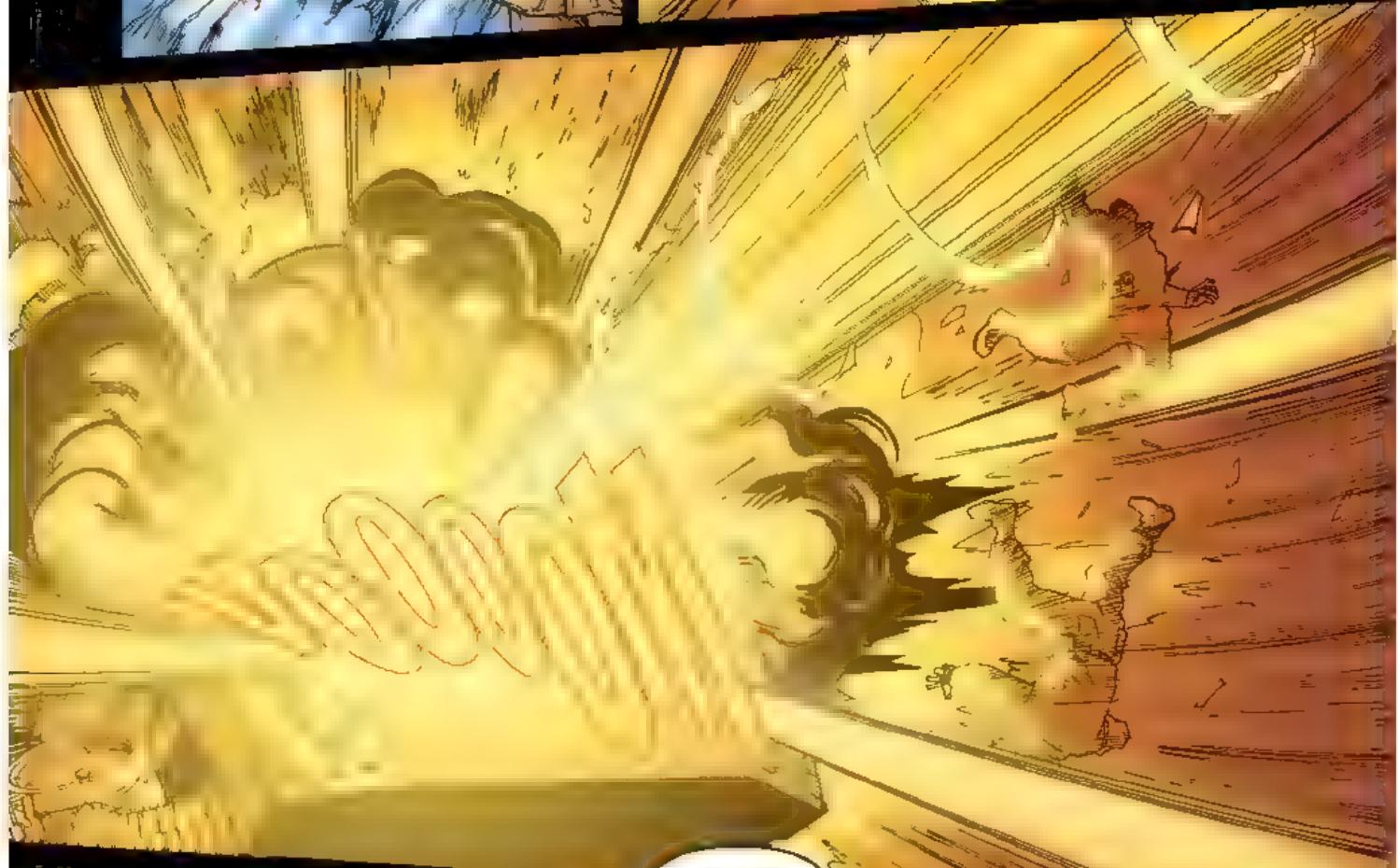
I DO NOT DO SO LIGHTLY

OF COURSE FORGIVE ME

PRIME WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION

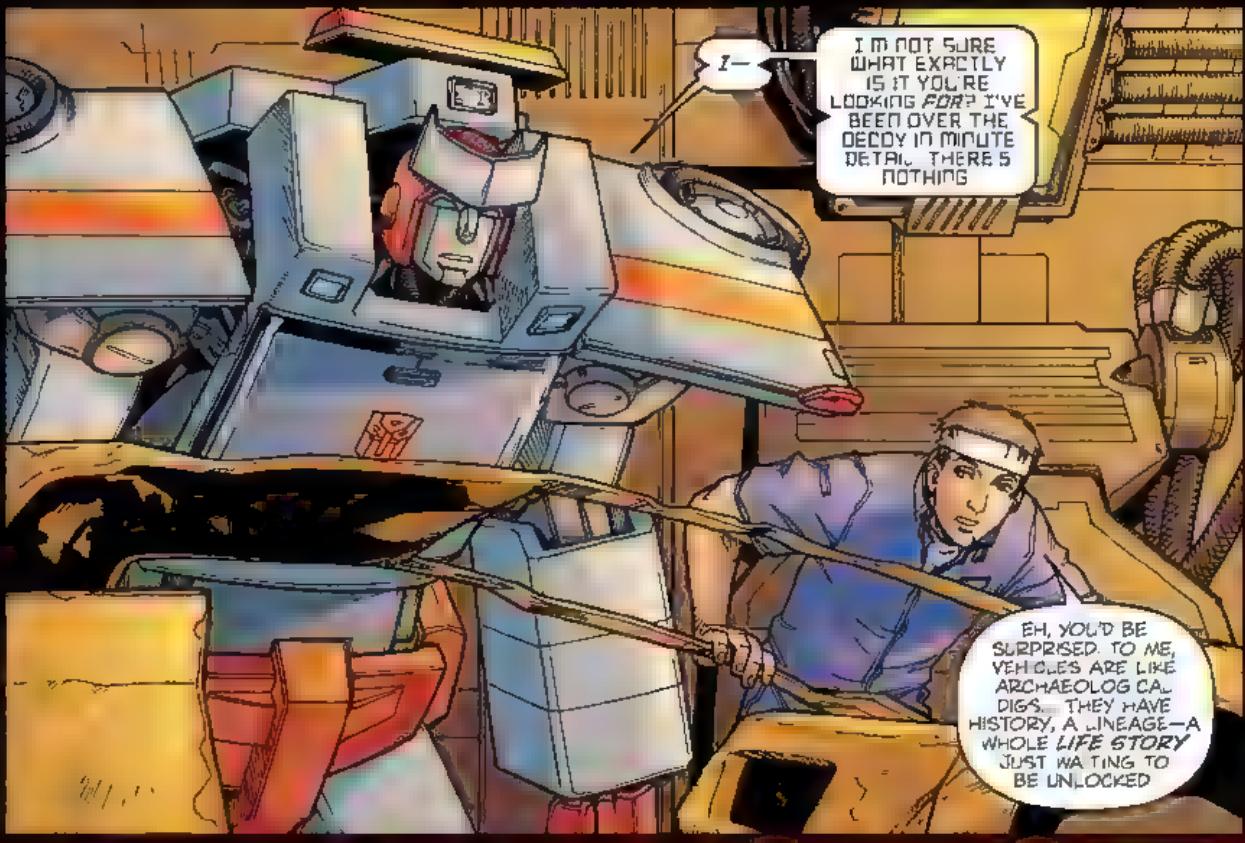


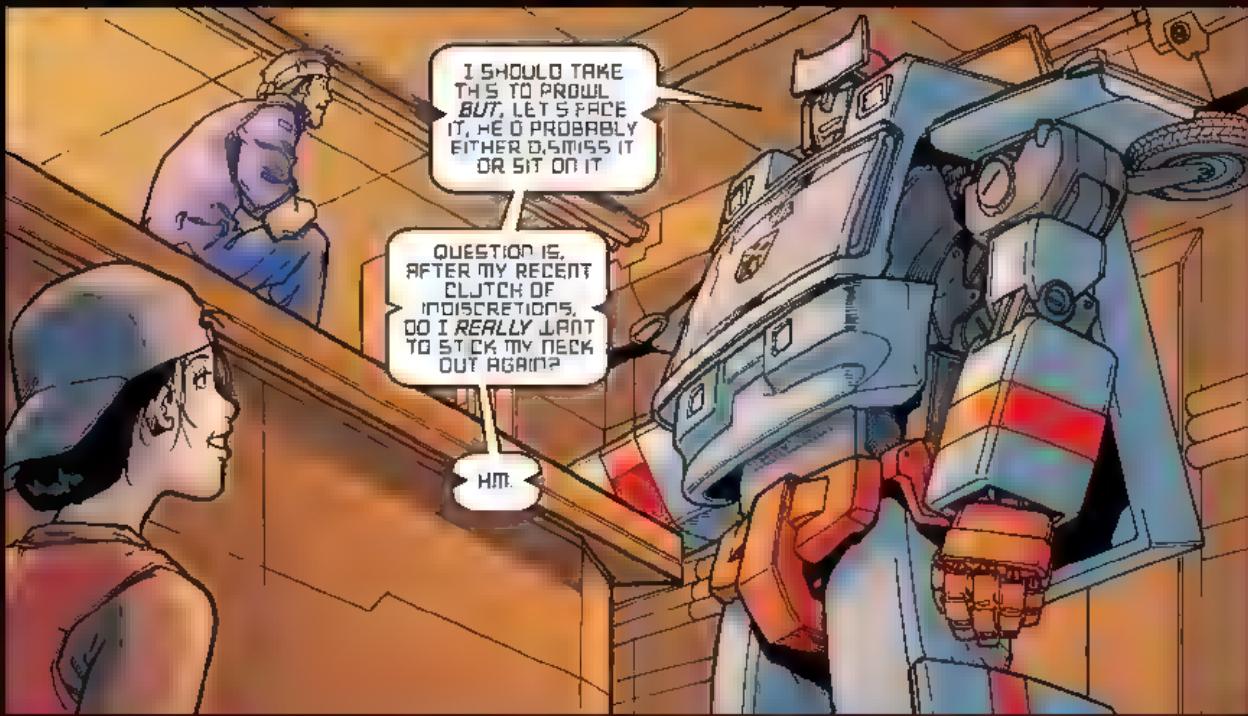




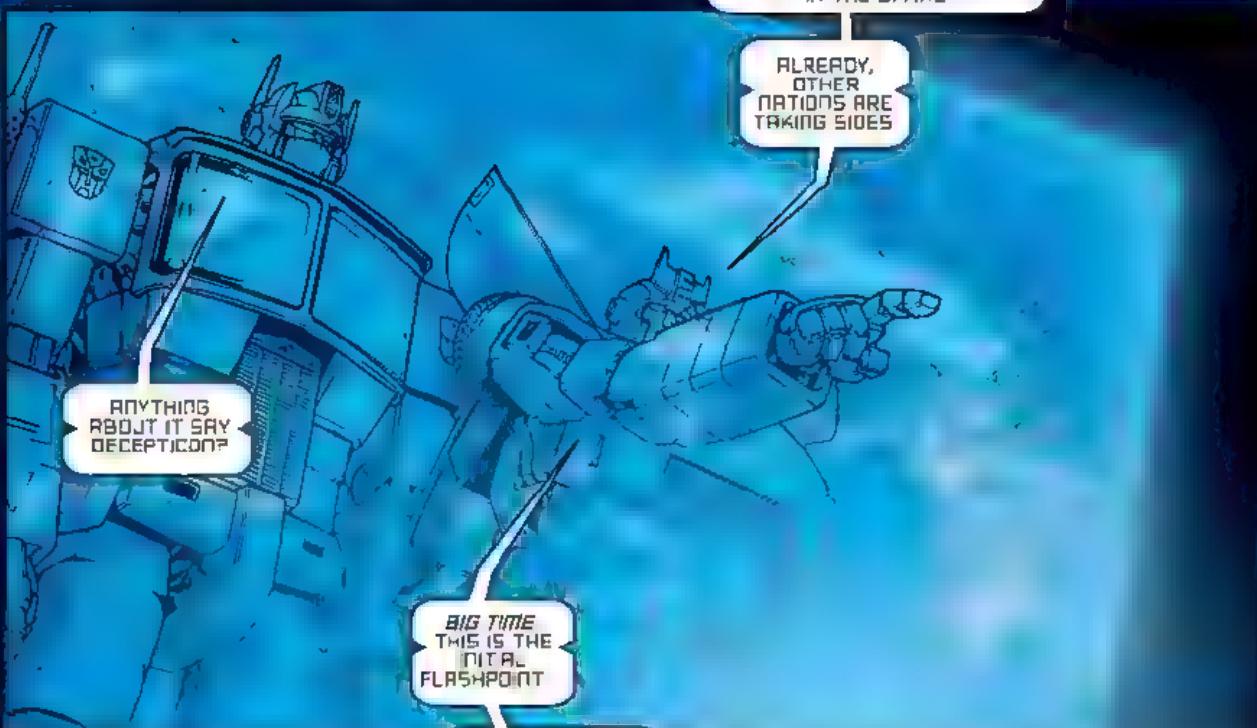
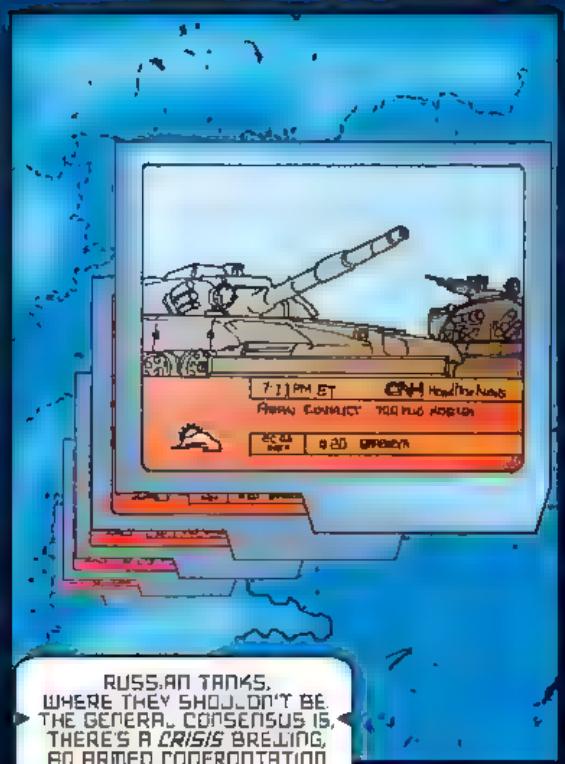
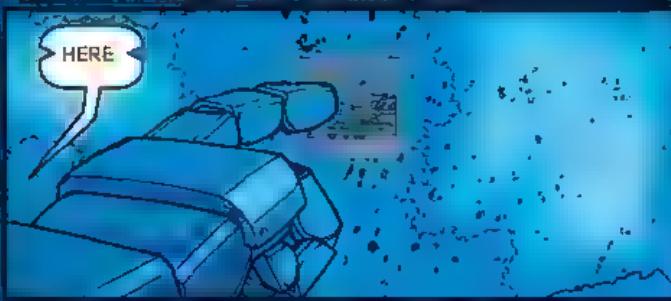


OH, HEY, HI,
RATCHET. DON'T
MIND ME TAKIN'
A LOOK-SEE,
DO YOU?





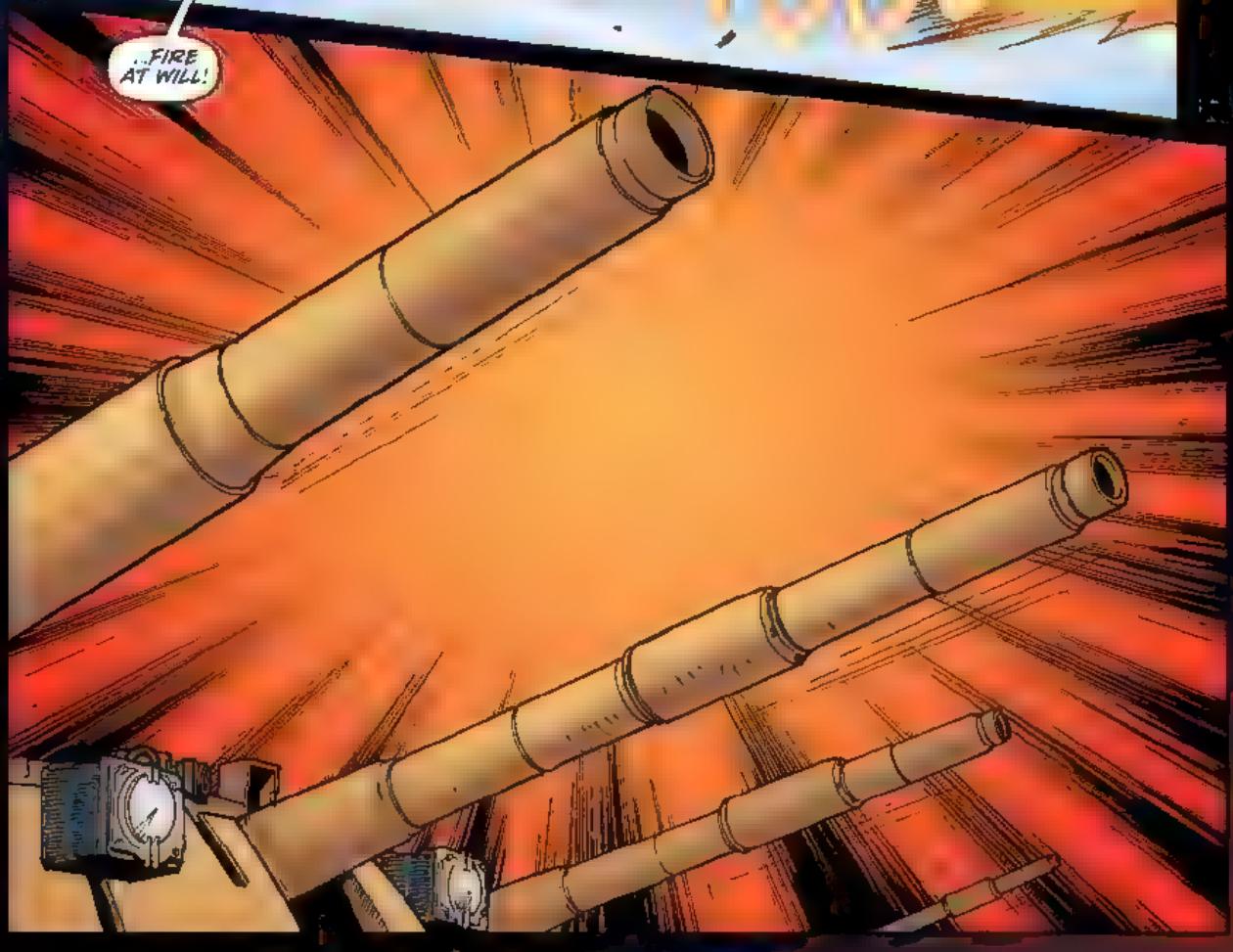


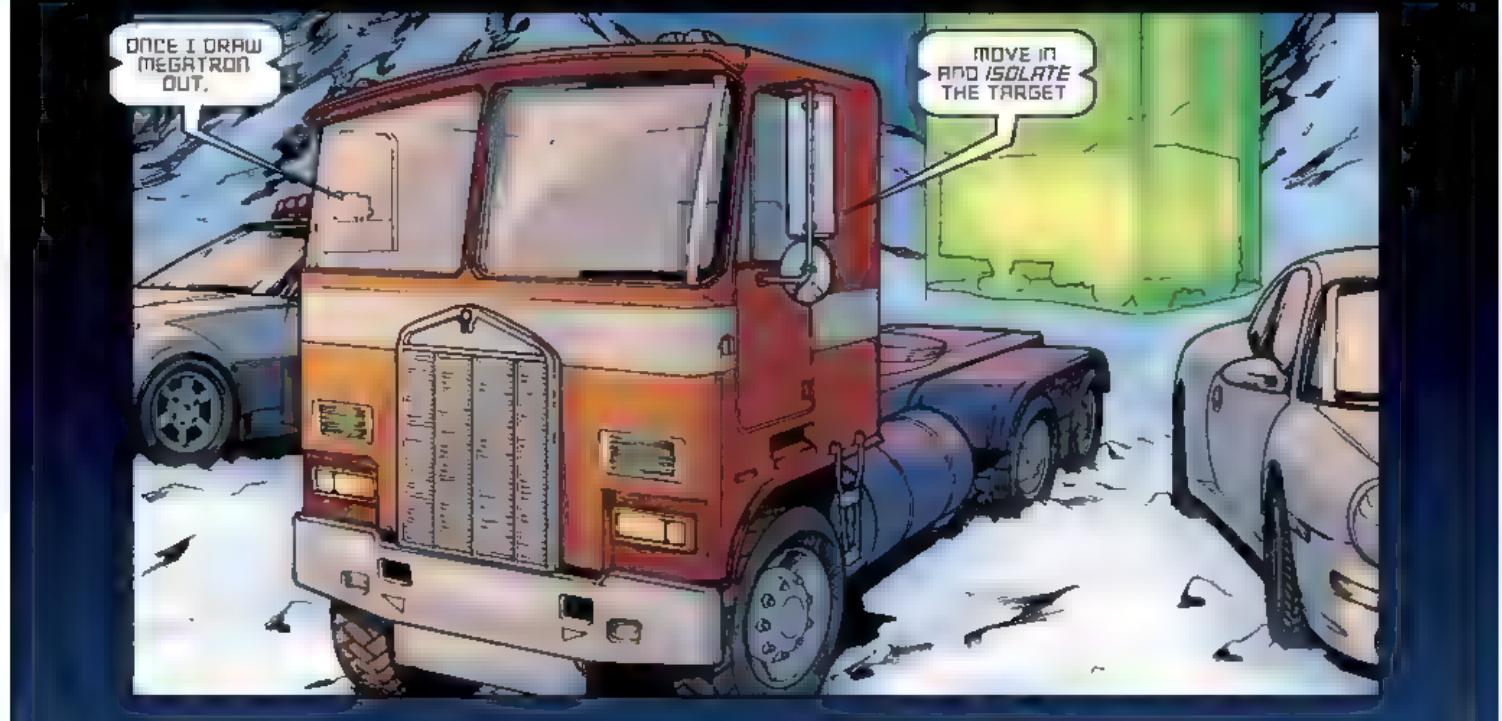
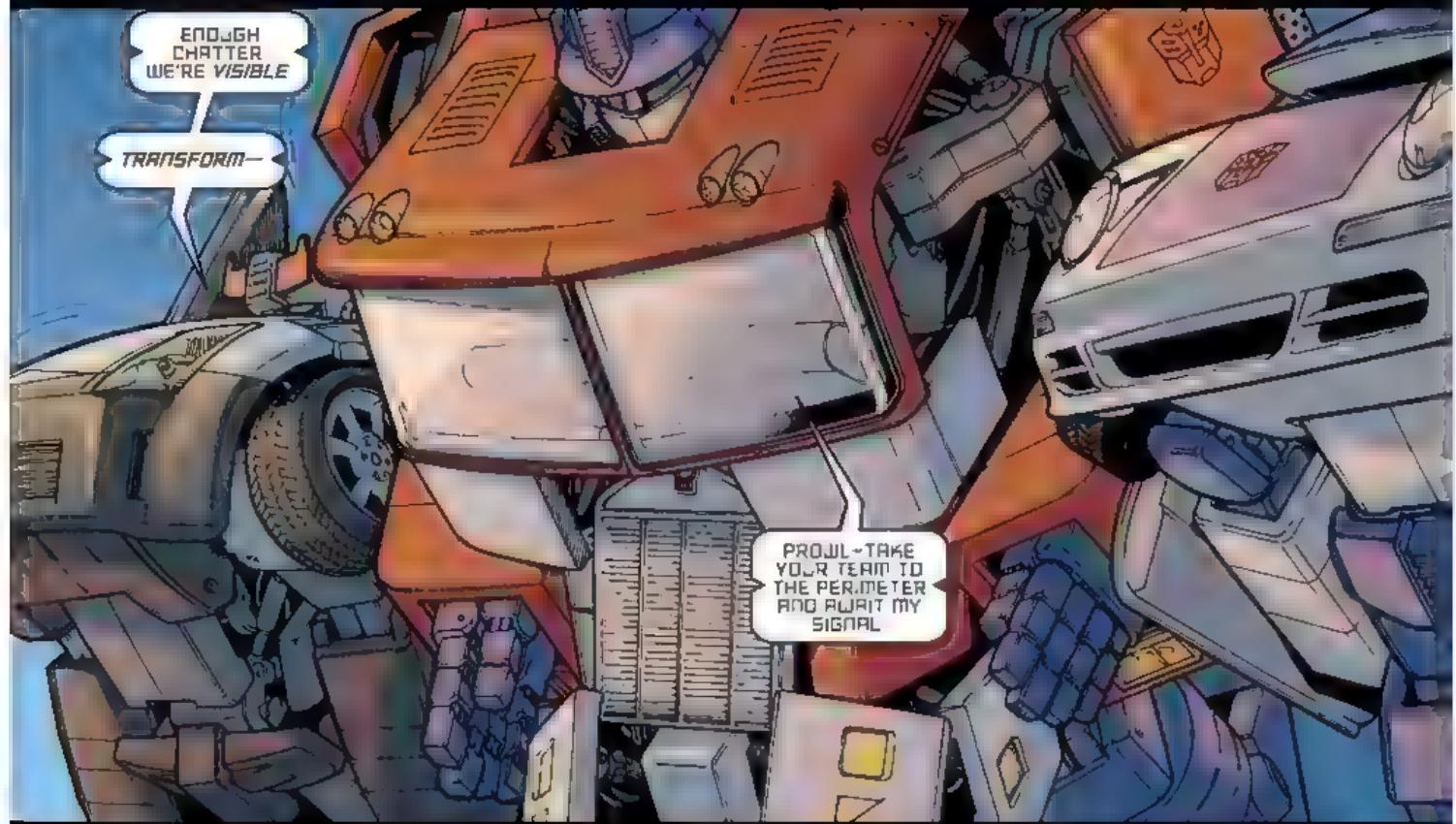
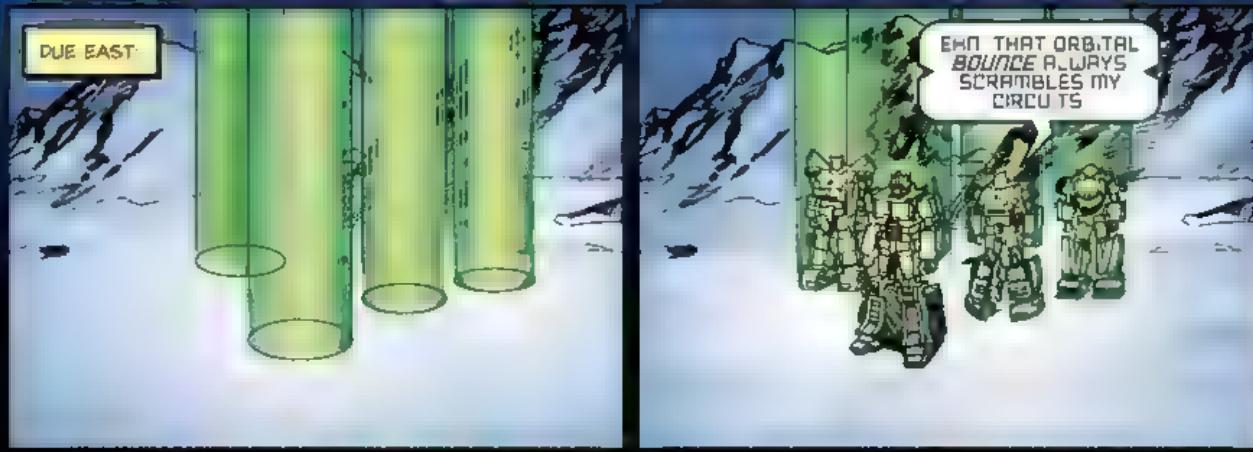


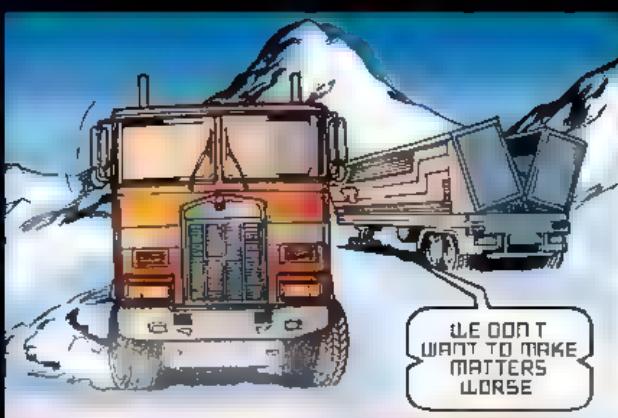




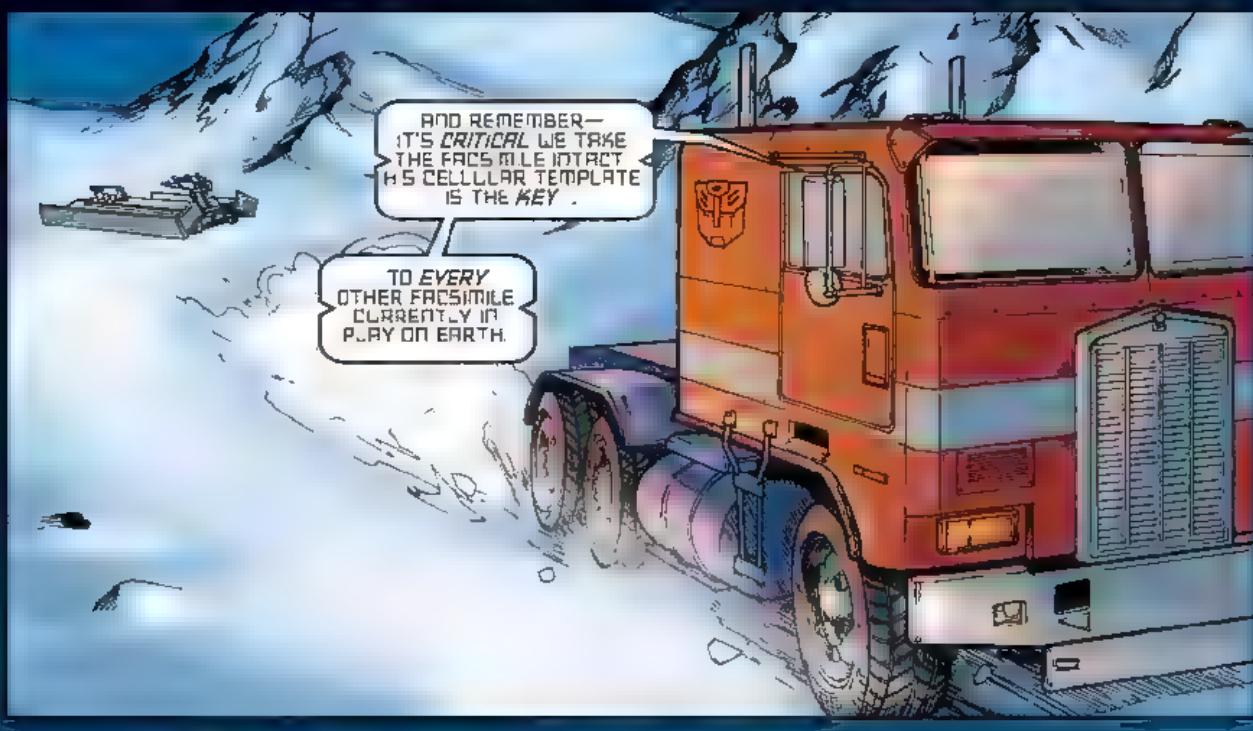


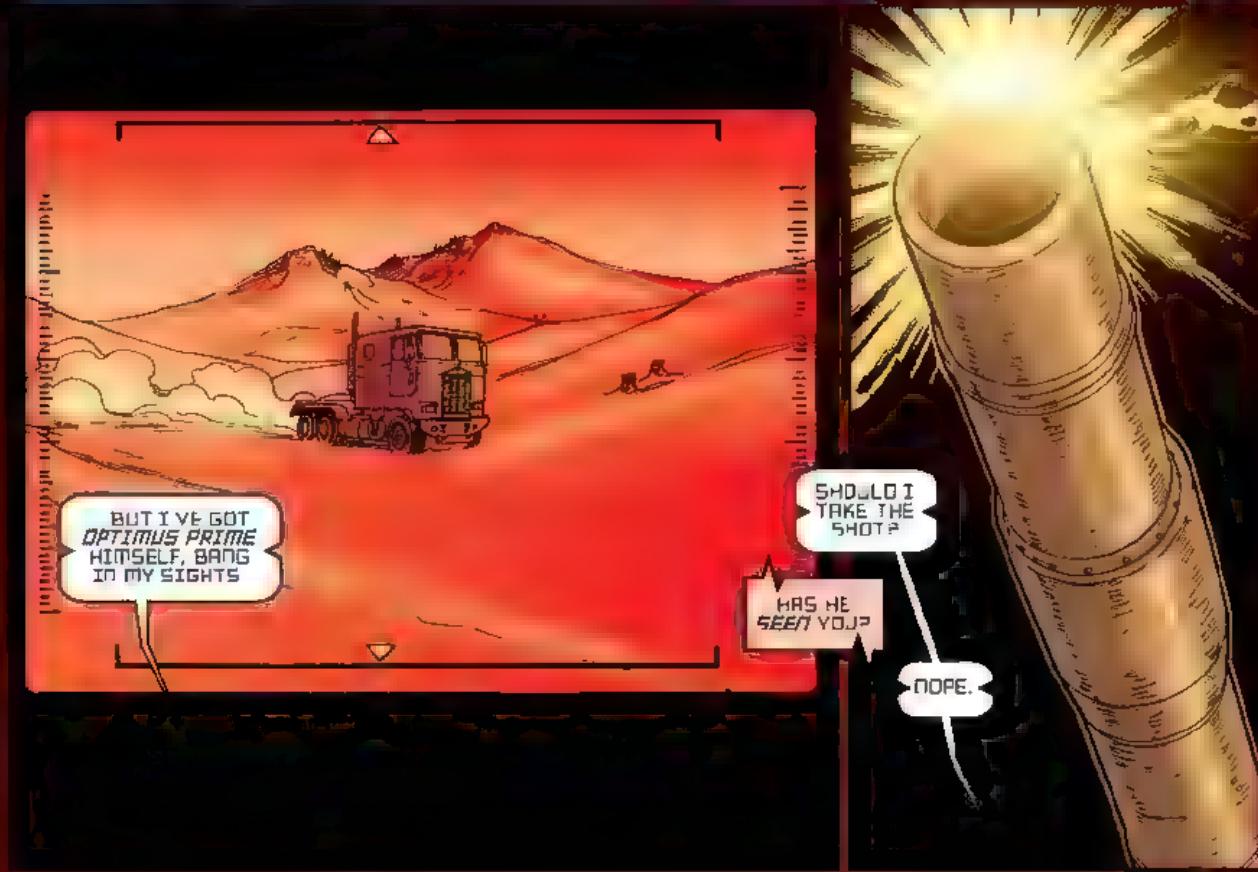
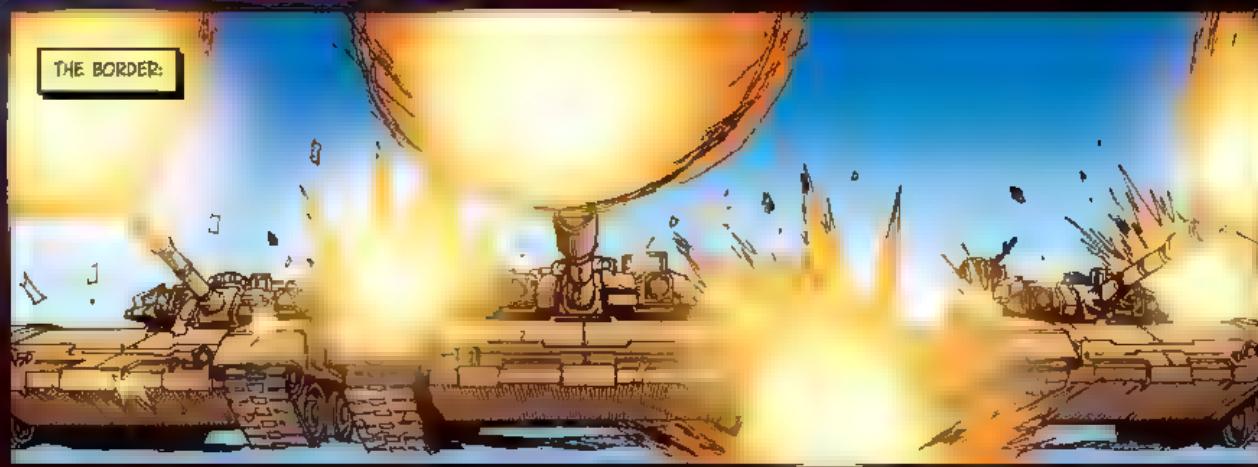


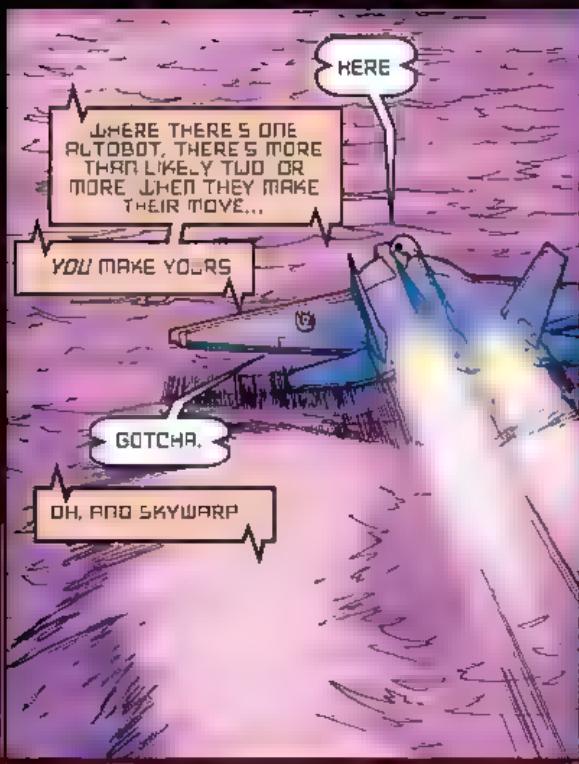
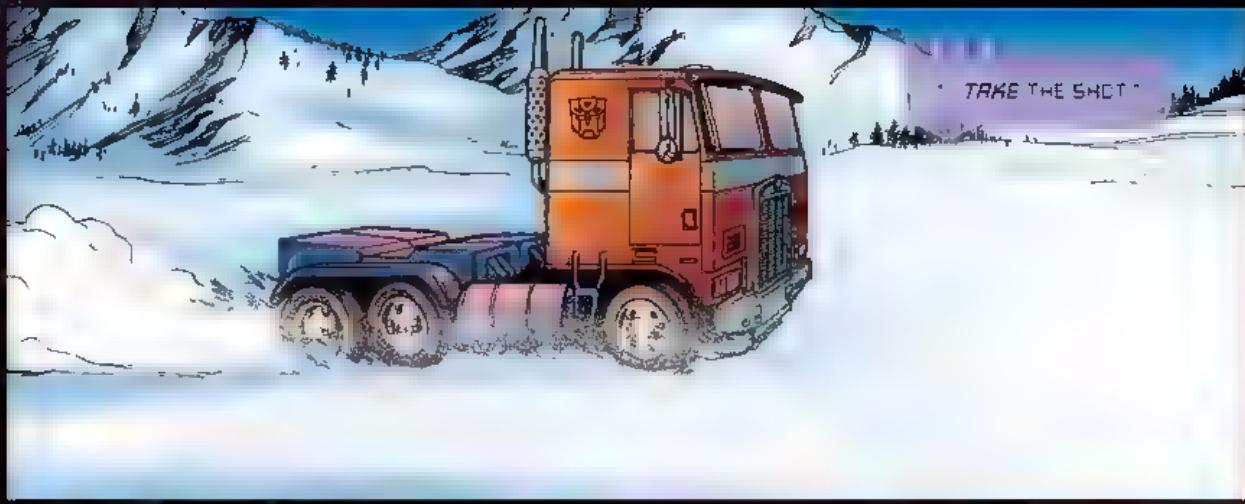




JAZZ-
TRACTION
STUDS





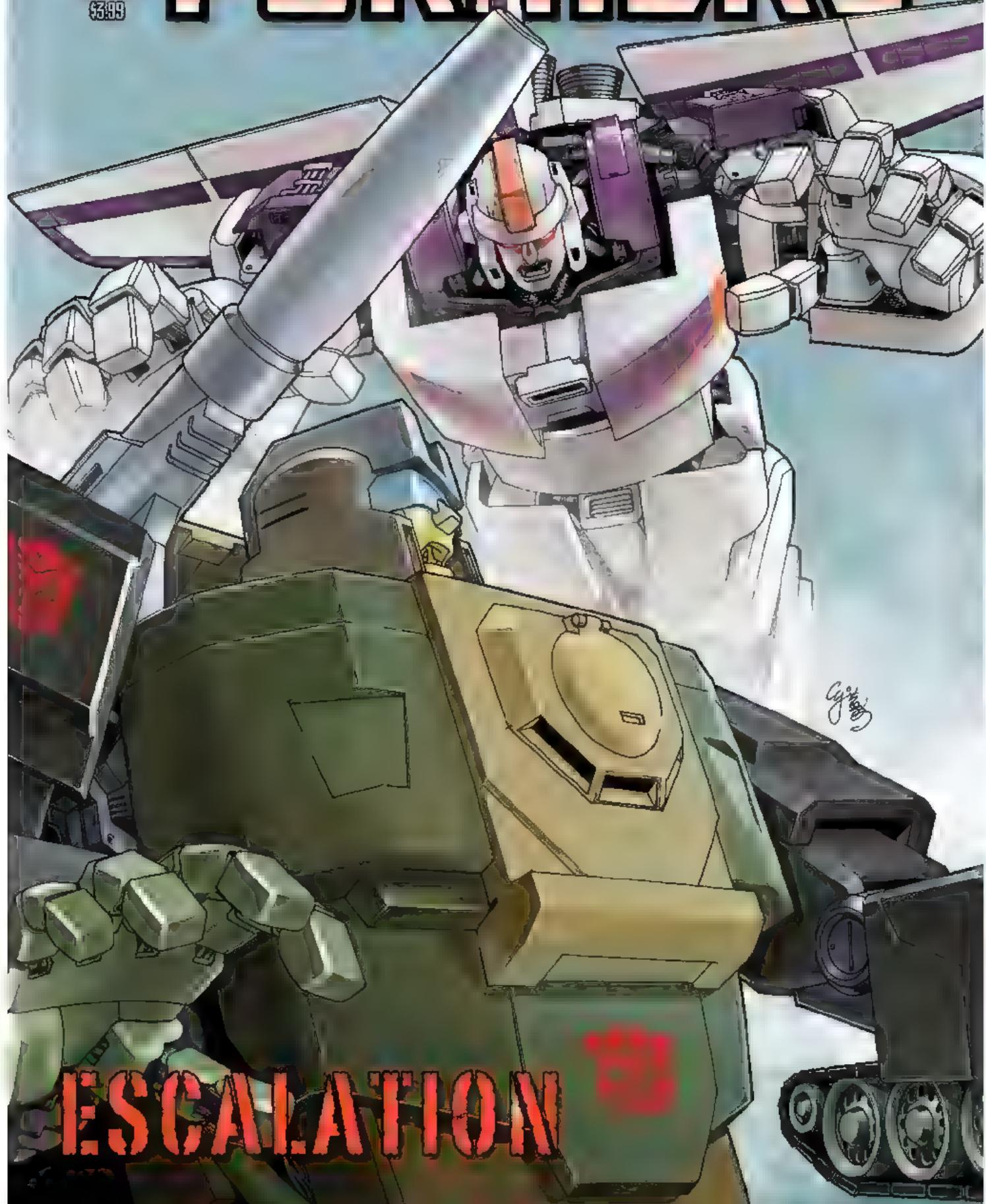






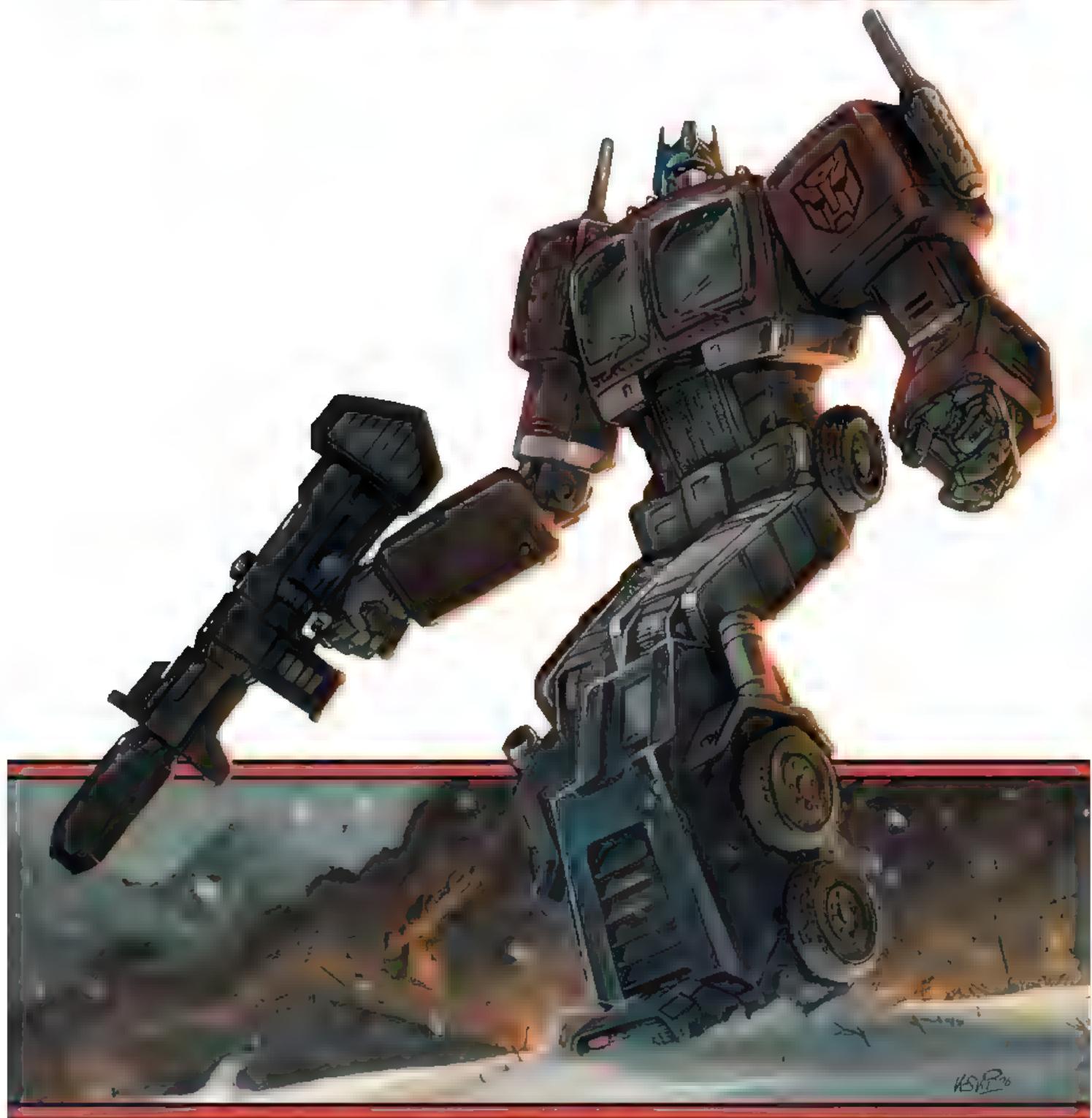


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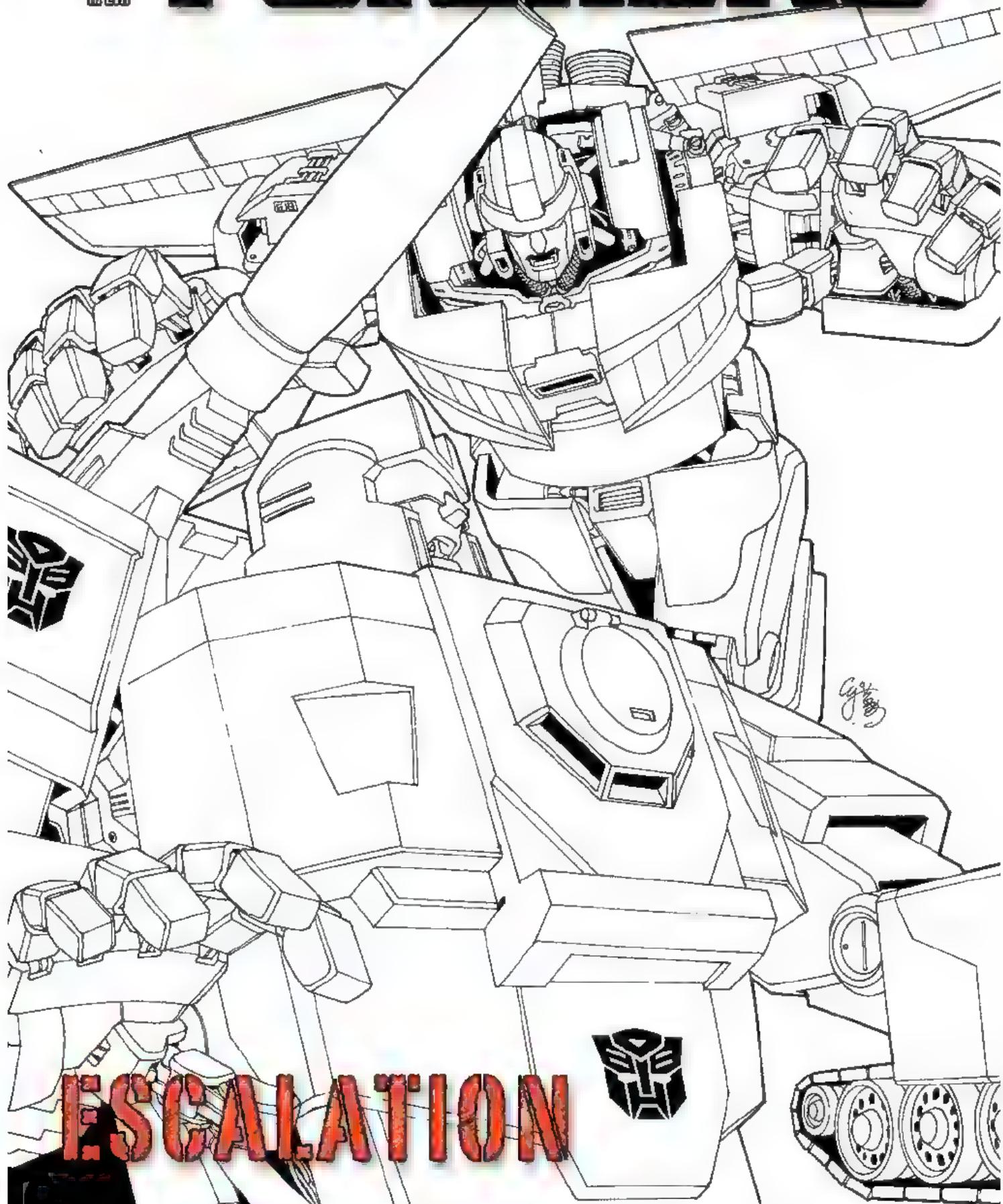
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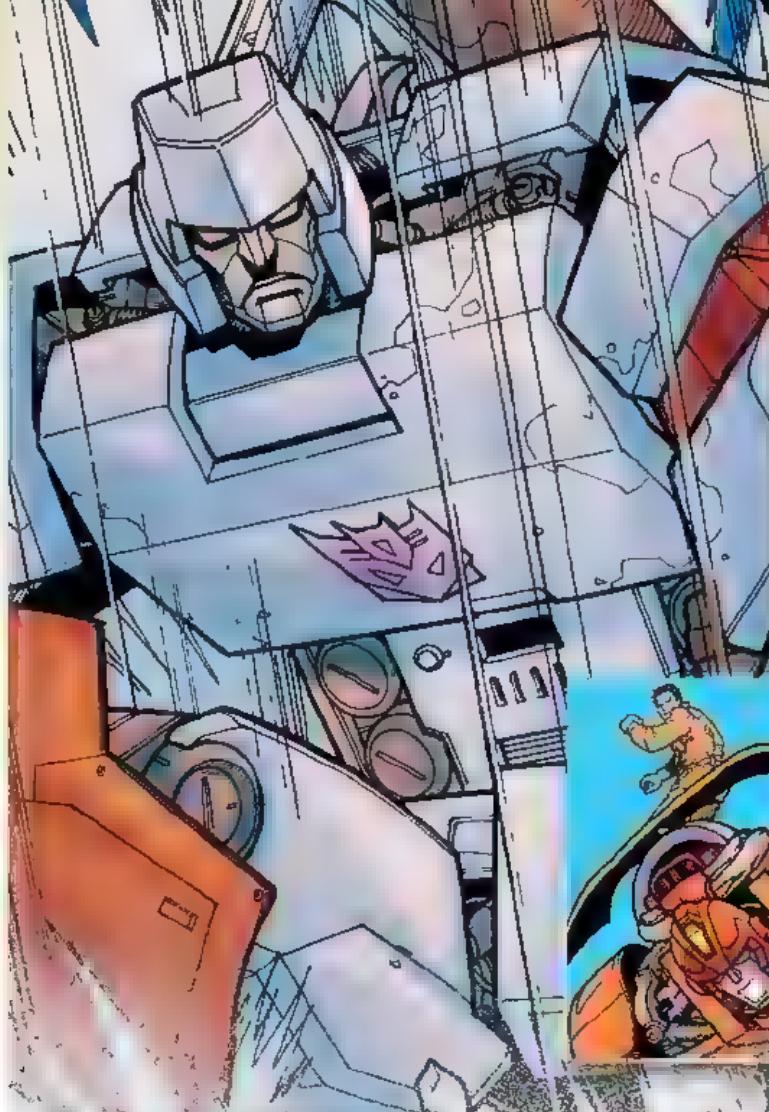
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THE TRANSFORMERS™



ESCALATION



THE TRANSFORMERS ESCALATION

WRITTEN BY **SIMON FURMAN**
ART BY **E.J. SU**
COLORS BY **ZAC ATKINSON**
LETTERS BY **NEIL UYETAKE**
EDITS BY **CHRIS RYALL & DAN TAYLOR**

COVER BY **E.J. SU**
VARIANT COVER BY **KLAUS SCHERWINSKI**

ISSUE NUMBER FOUR

ESCALATION

When an incendiary conflict fares on a disputed stretch of border between Russia and the breakaway state of Brasnya, OPTIMUS PRIME leads an Autobot assault team into the area in an effort to frustrate MEGATRON's efforts to agitate the tense standoff and capture the artificial human (facsimile) GEORGI KOSKA. And back in the USA, IRONHIDE, RATCHET, VERITY CARLO and JIMMY PINK seek to shed light on the mysterious abduction of SUNSTREAKER and HUNTER O'NION...

PHASE TWO CONTINUES...



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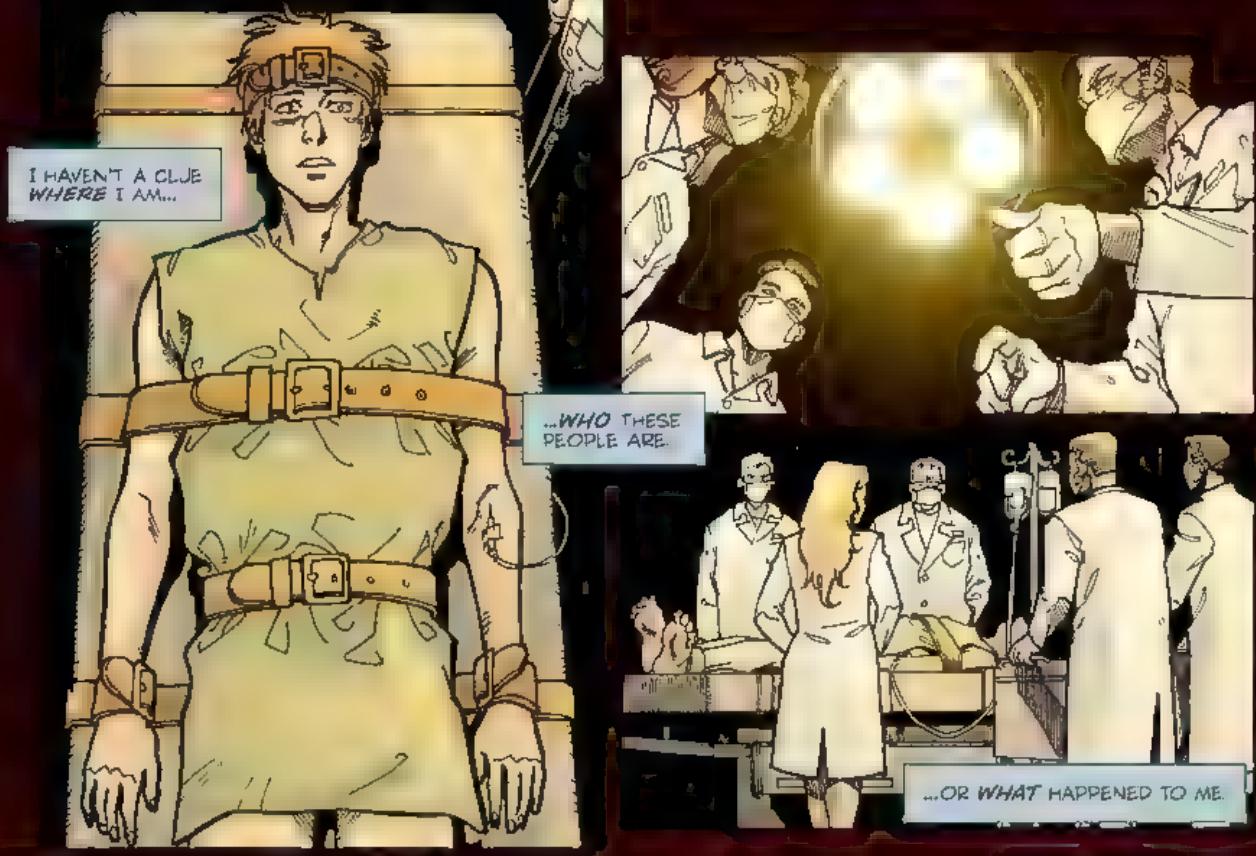
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FORT WAYNE,
INDIANA.

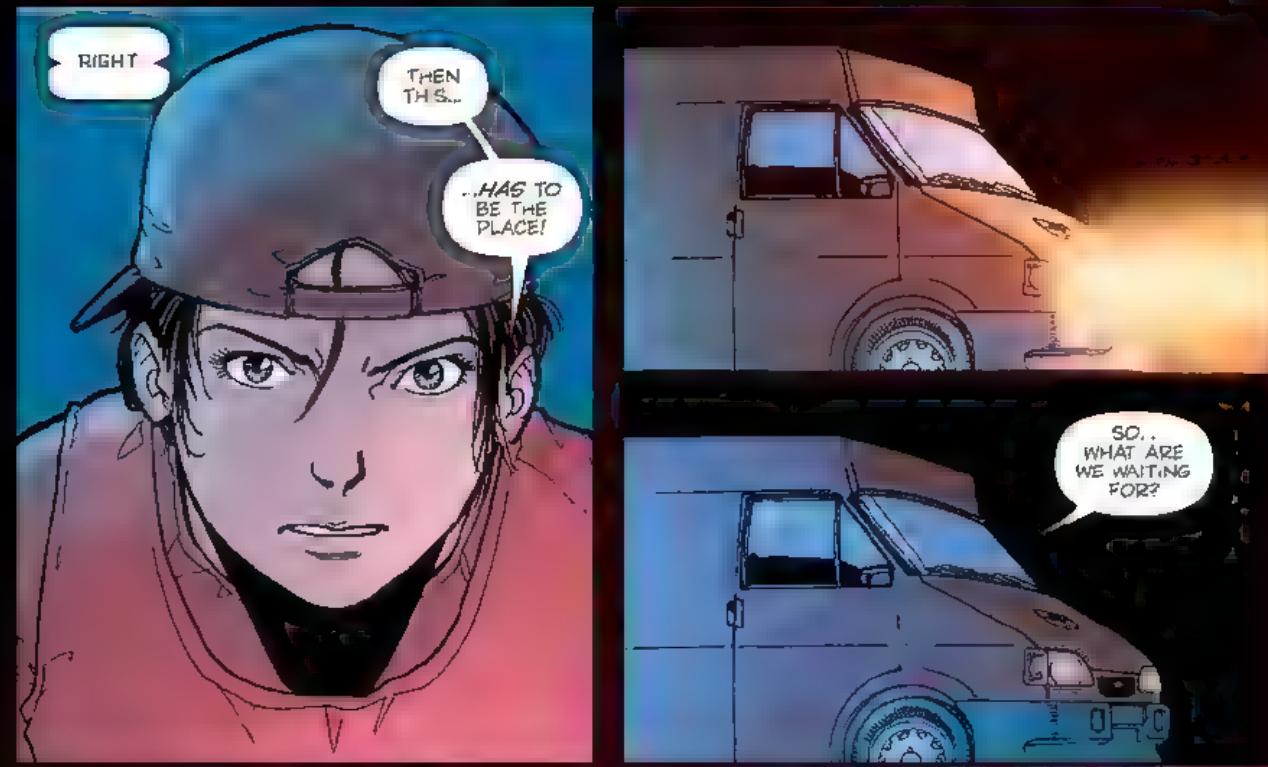
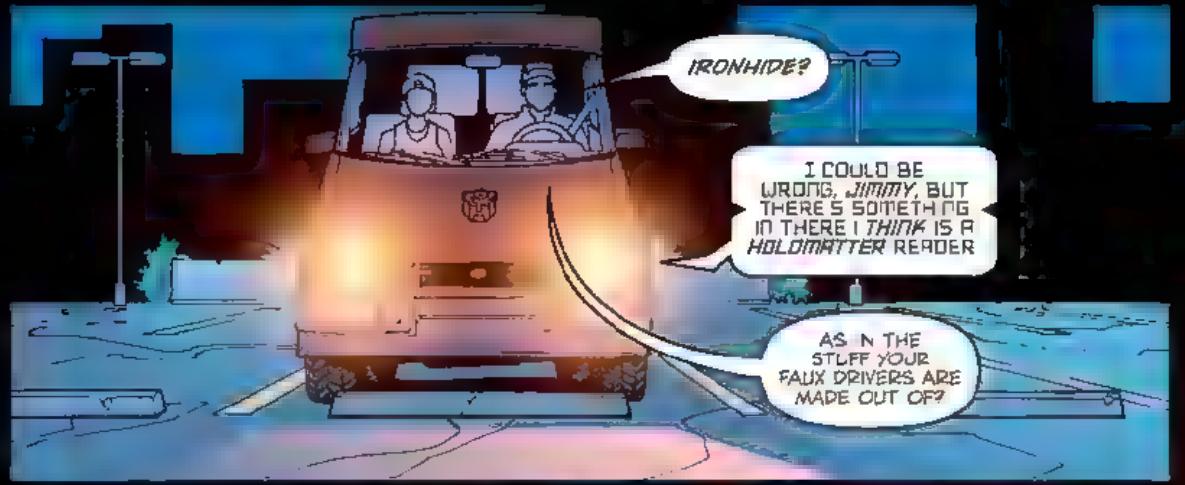
IDEA & DESIGN WORKS CUSTOM WHEEL

I KNOW THE
CRIME RATE
HEREABOUTS
HAS GONE
SKY-HIGH...

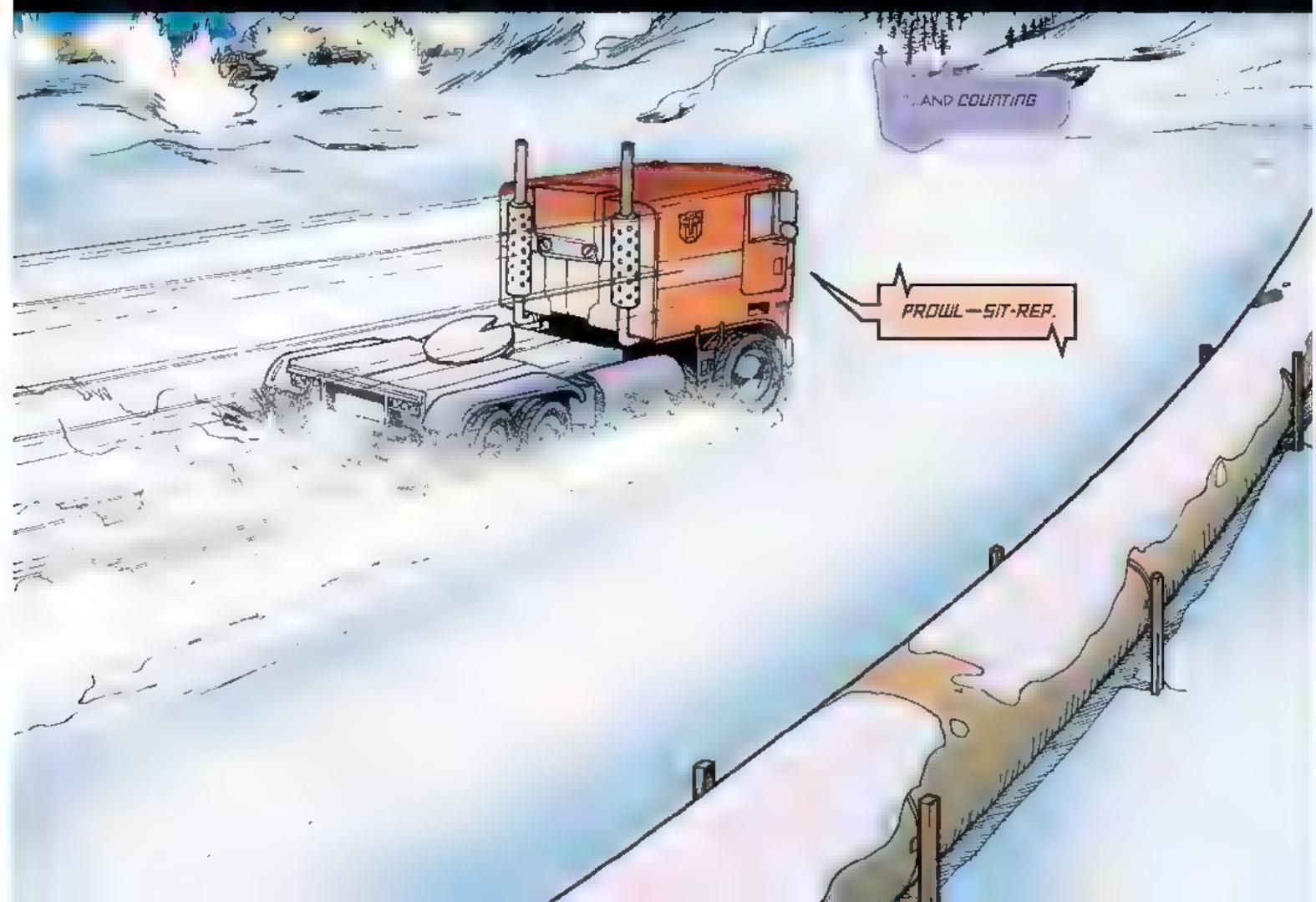
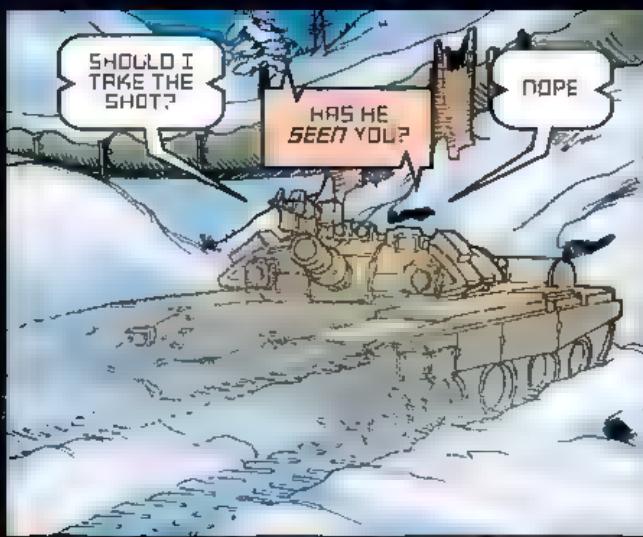
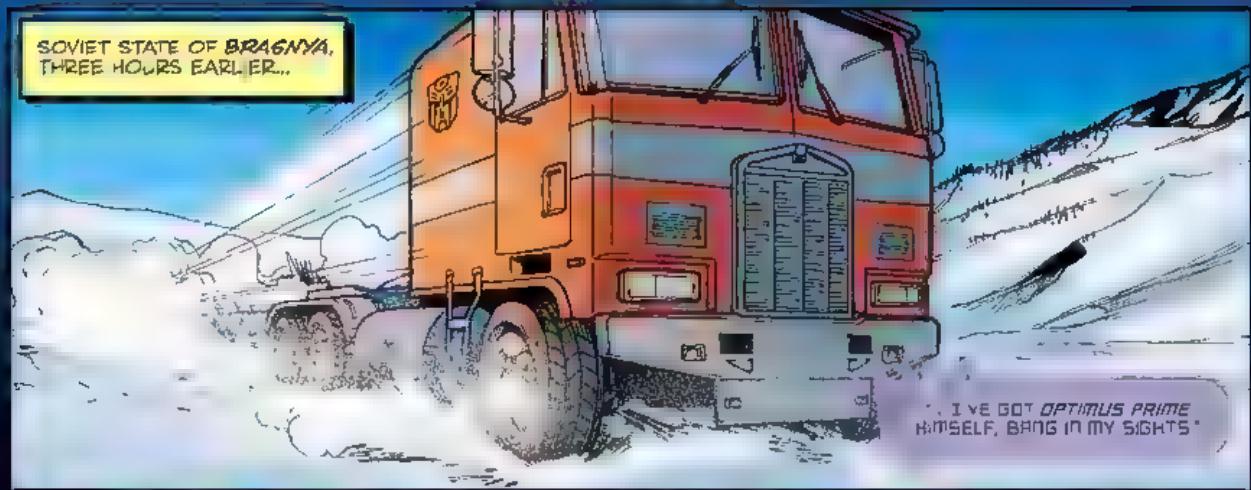
...BUT ISN'T
THIS ON THE
EXTREME
SIDE?

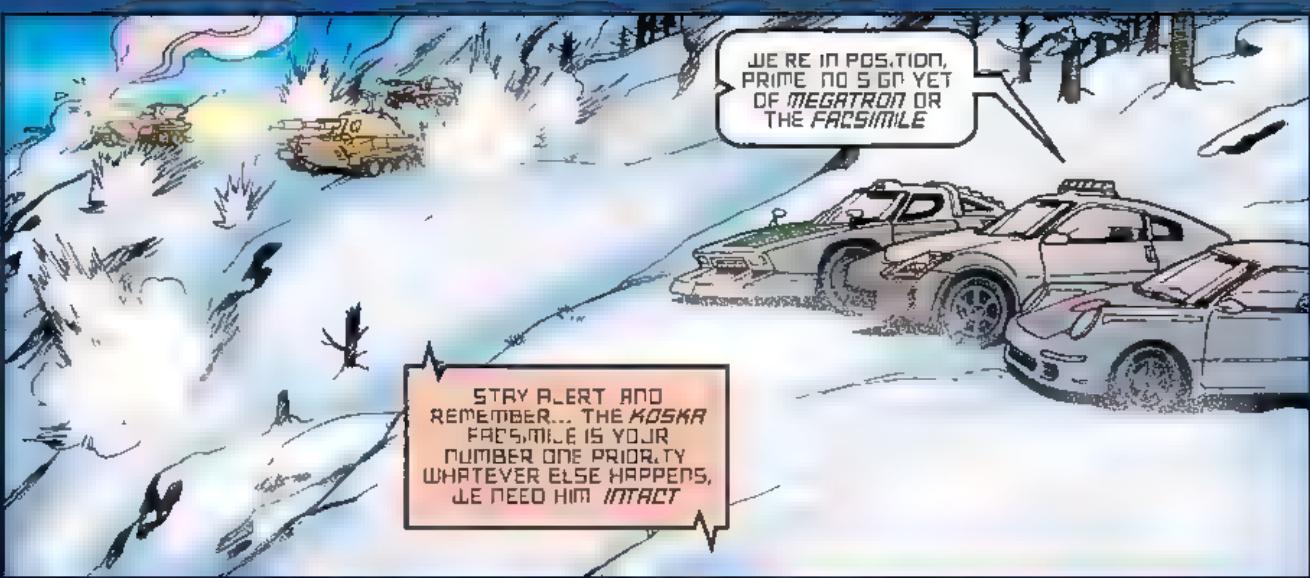
RIGHT.
THAT'S A LOT OF
SECURITY FOR A
FEW WHEELTRIMS
AND SOME RODGY
IN-CAR AUDI

AND IT'S
SOPHISTICATED
STUFF. MAYBE TOO
SOPHISTICATED









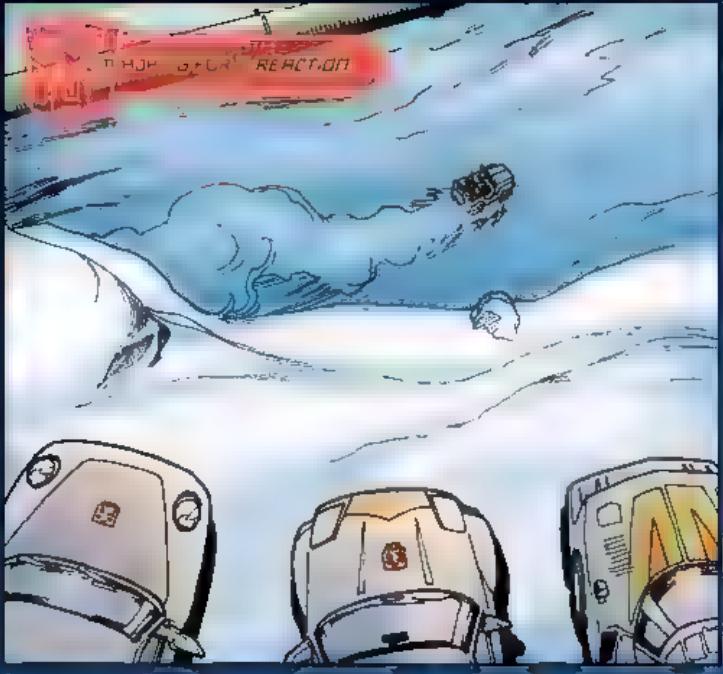
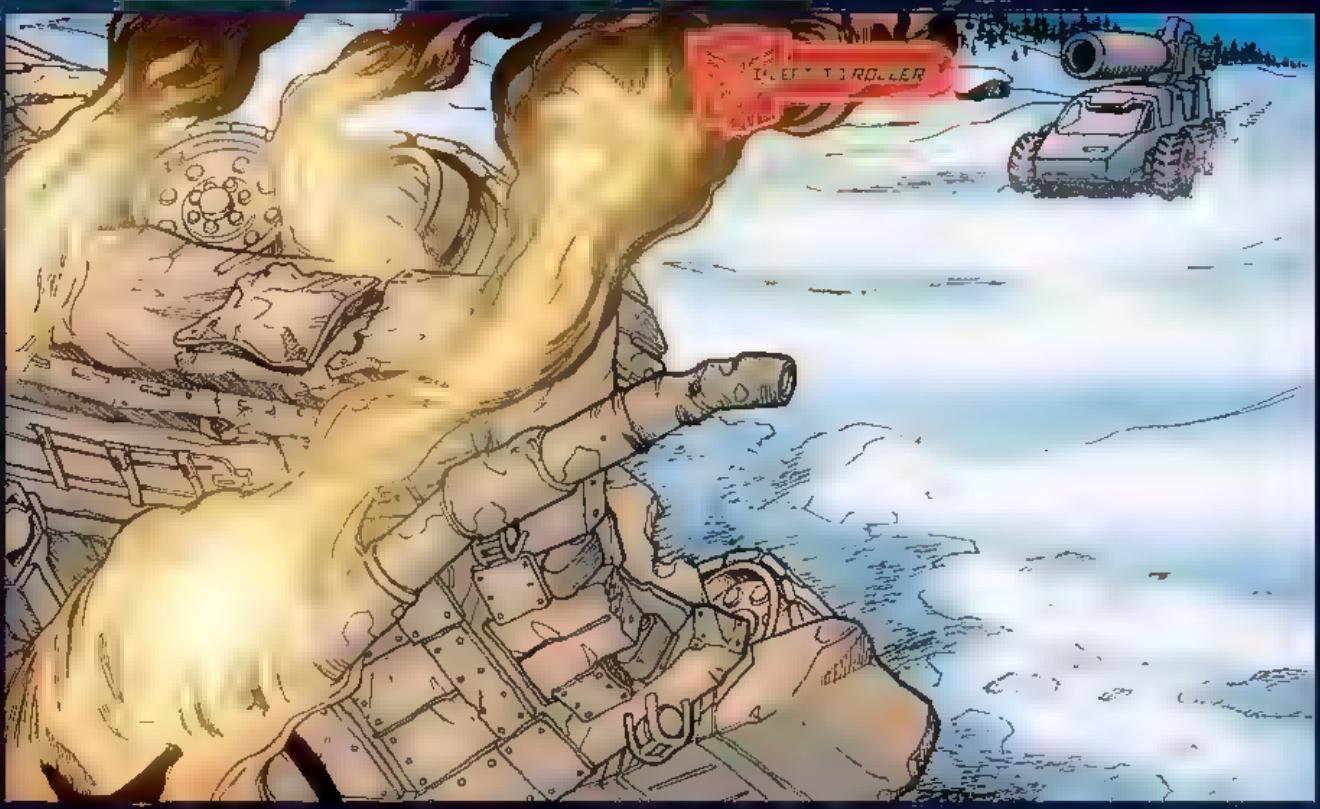
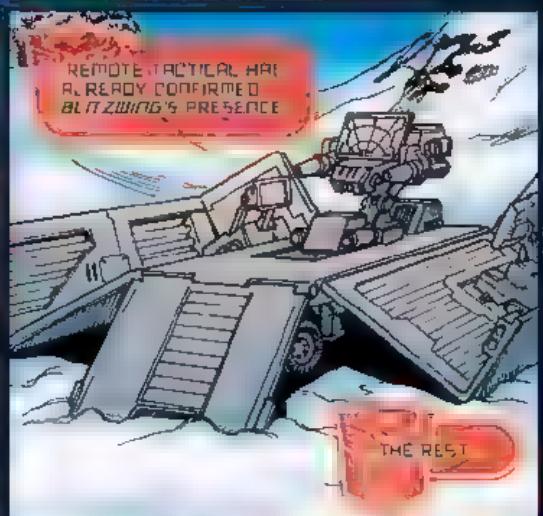
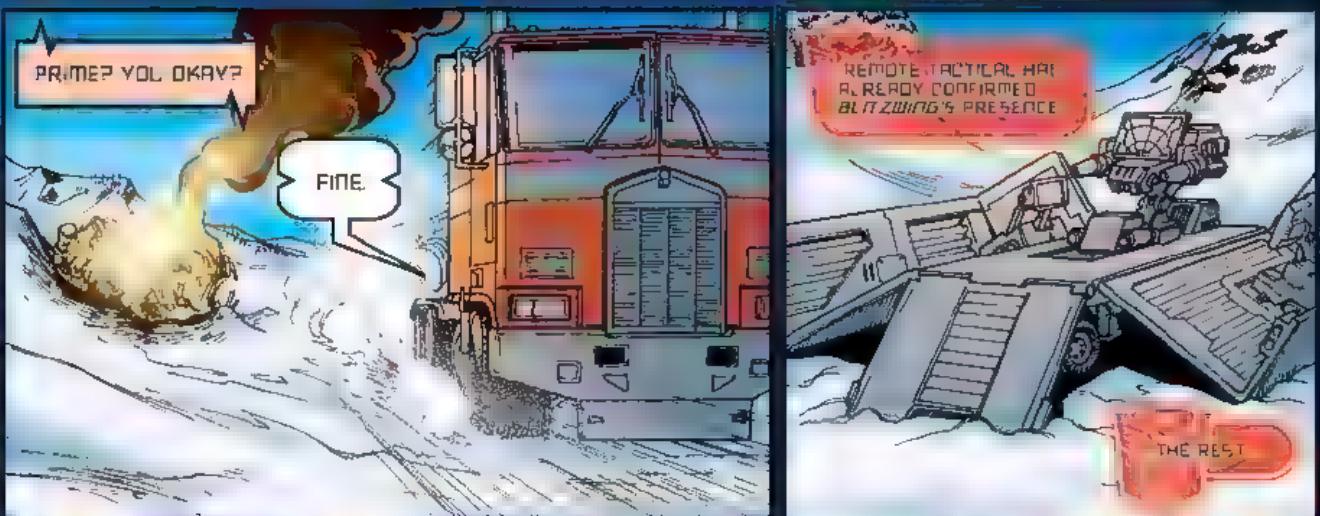
STAY ALERT AND
REMEMBER... THE KOSKA
FACSIMILE IS YOUR
NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.
WHATEVER ELSE HAPPENS,
WE NEED HIM INTACT



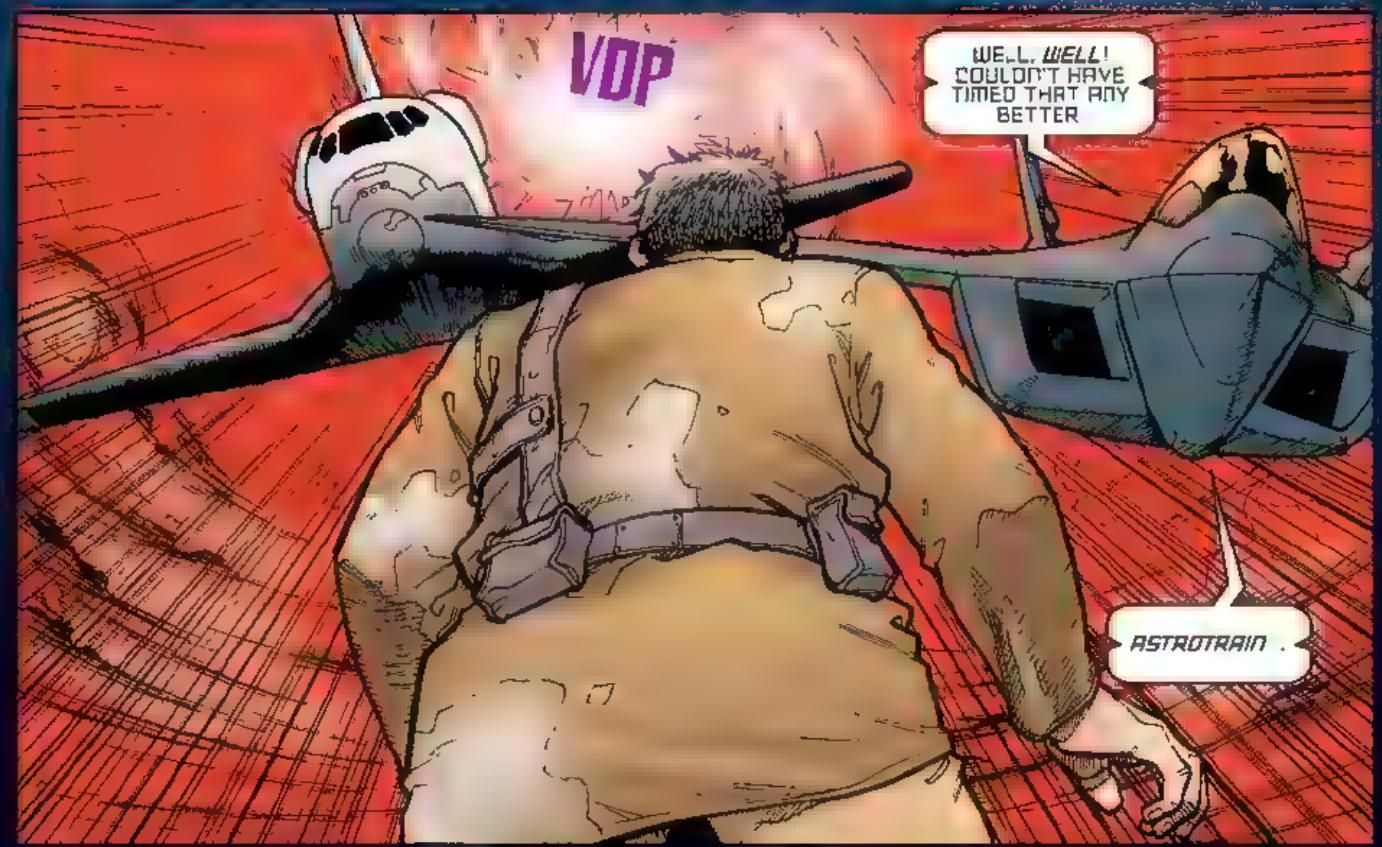
TWO. ONE

FI-YAAAHH!









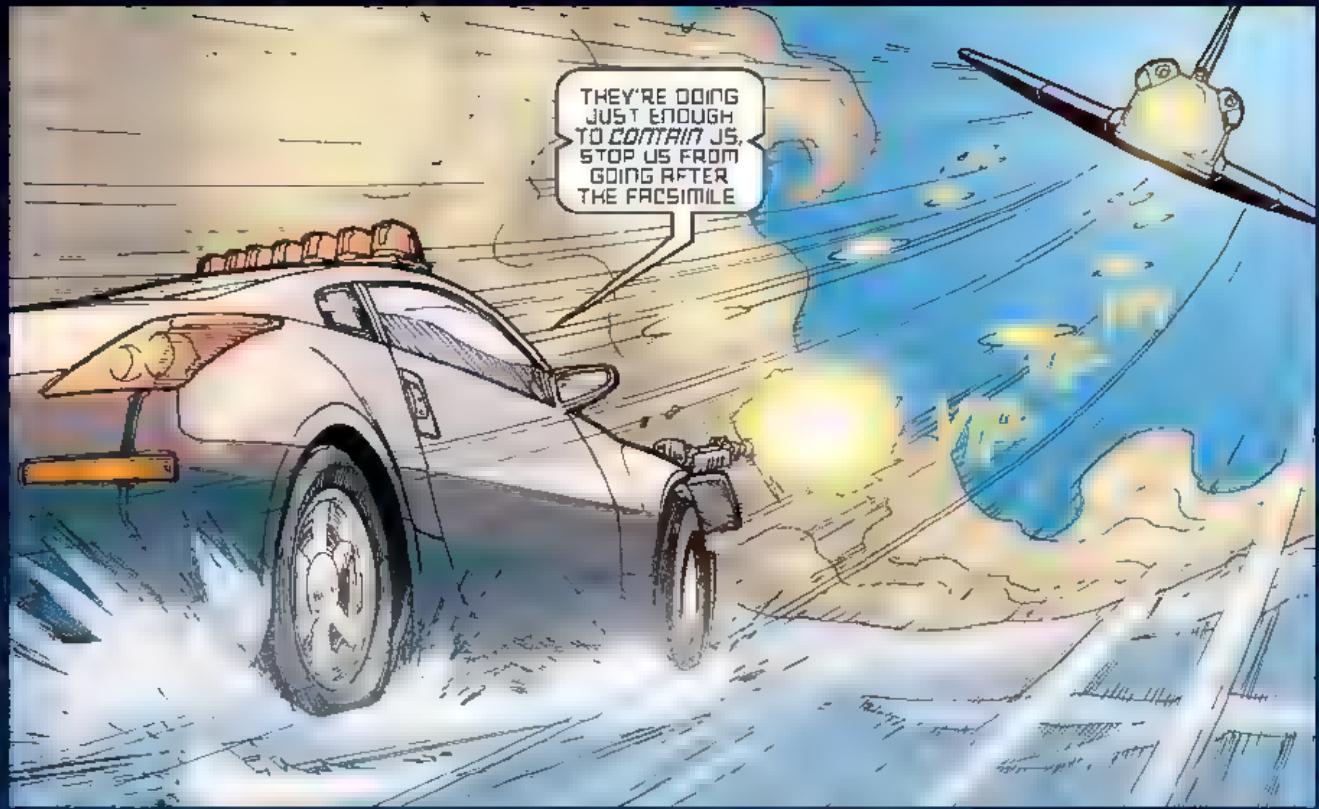
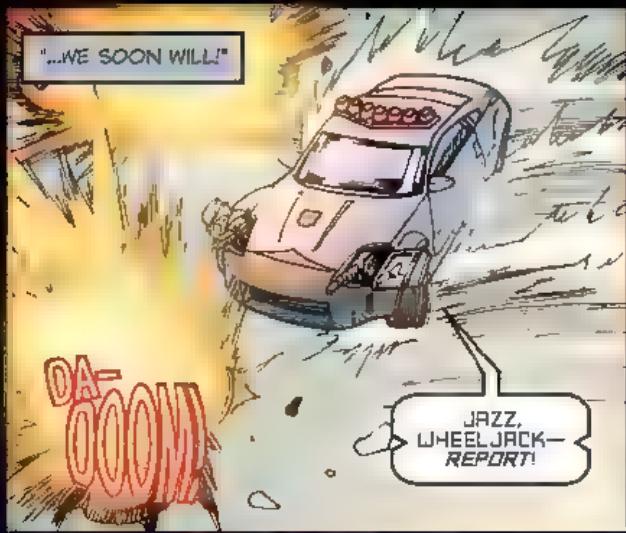


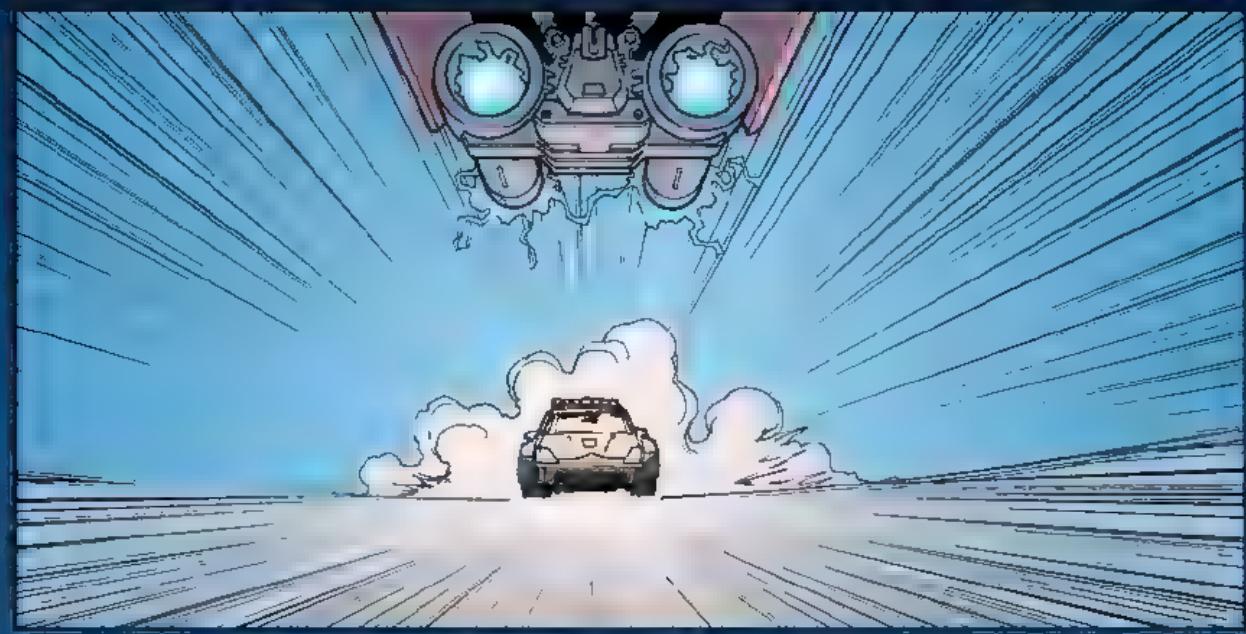
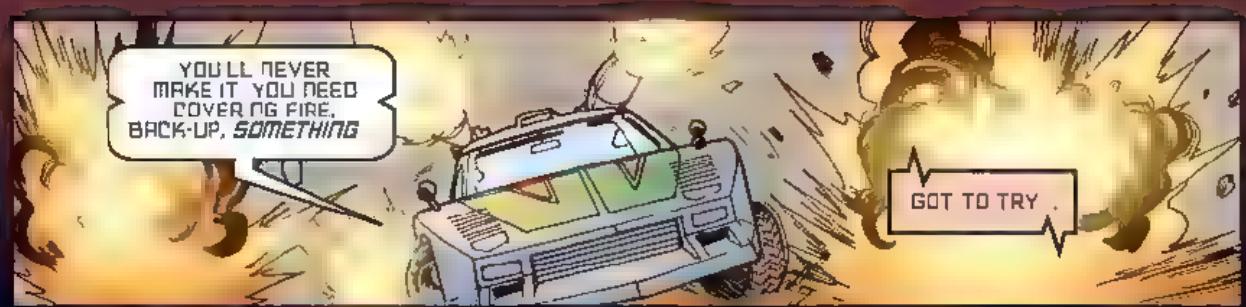


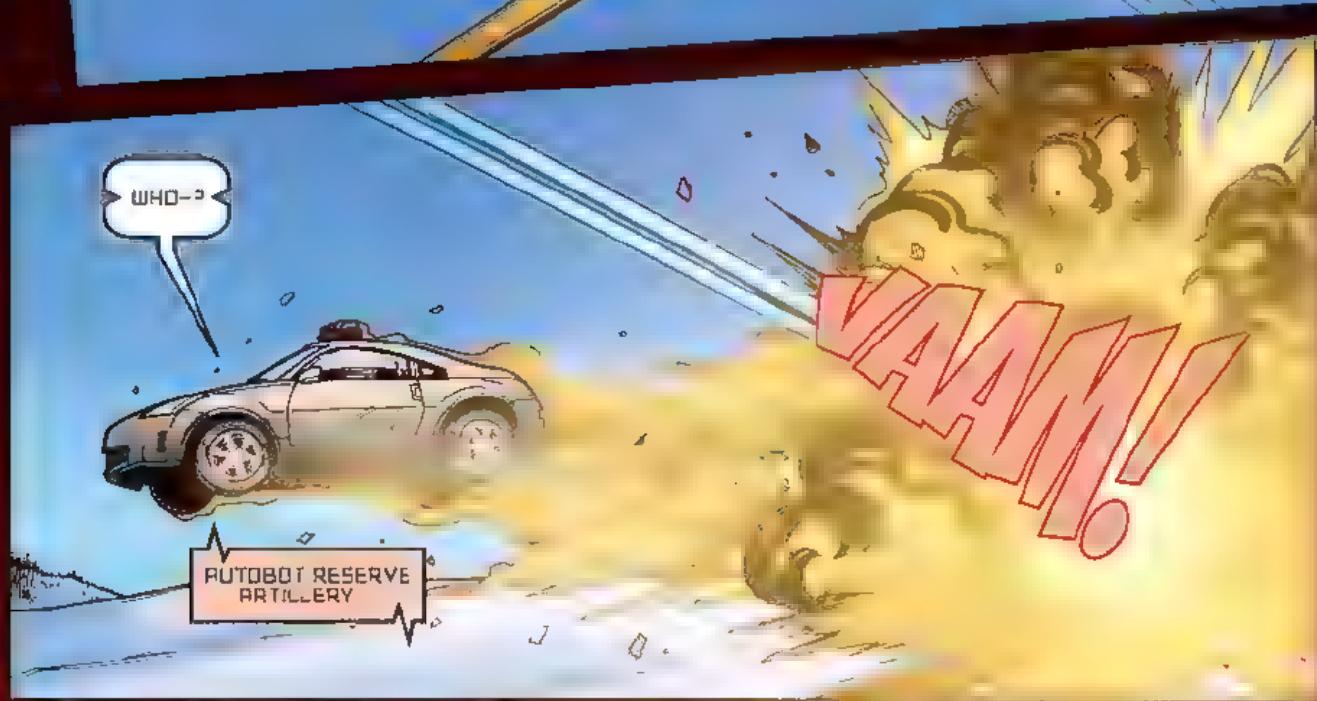
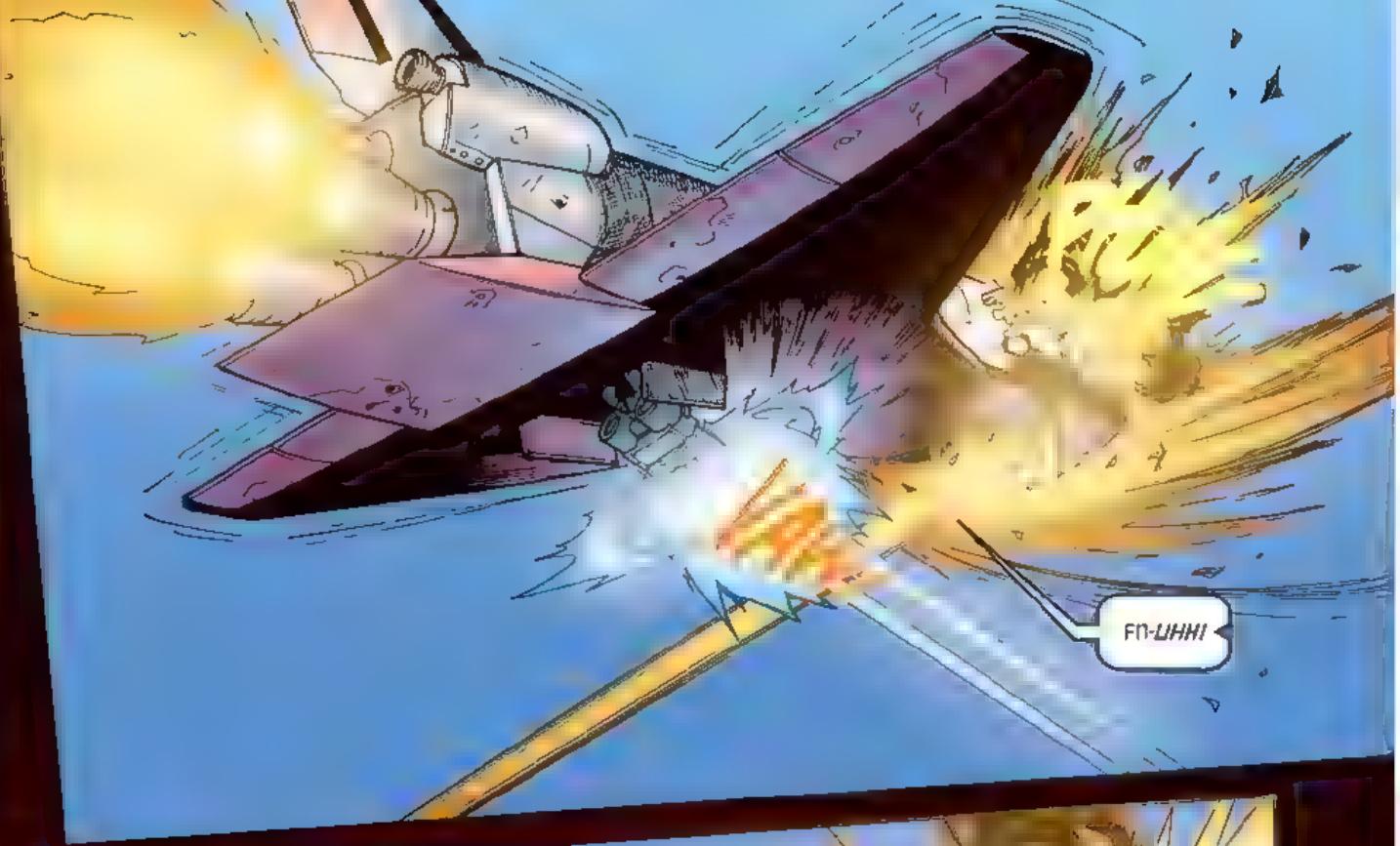












WHAT THE—?

WHY OF ALL
THE PLACES TO
RUN INTO TRAFFIC!

EHHH!

GEEZ!

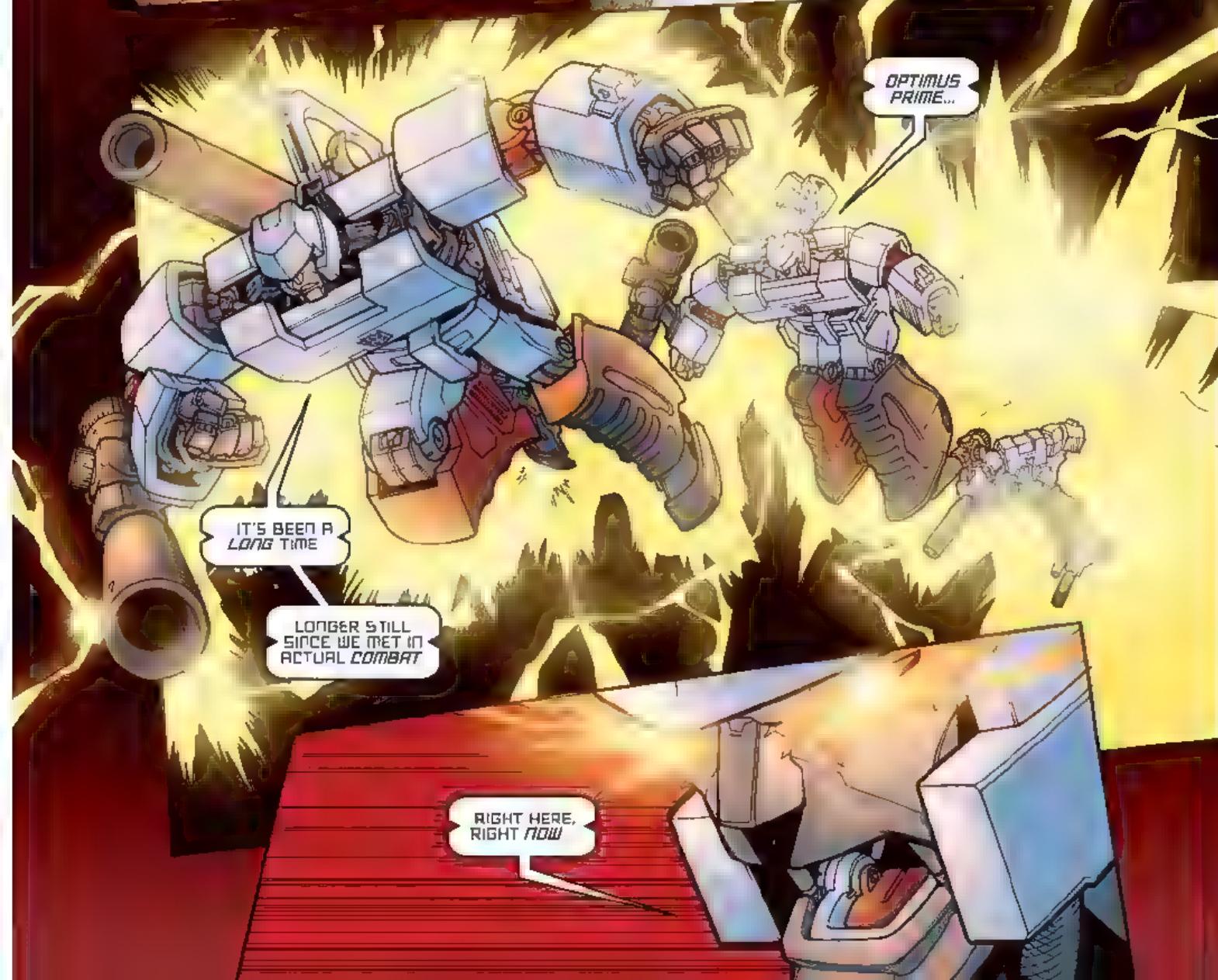
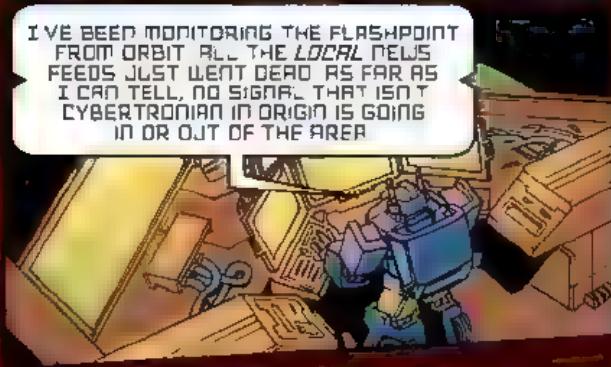
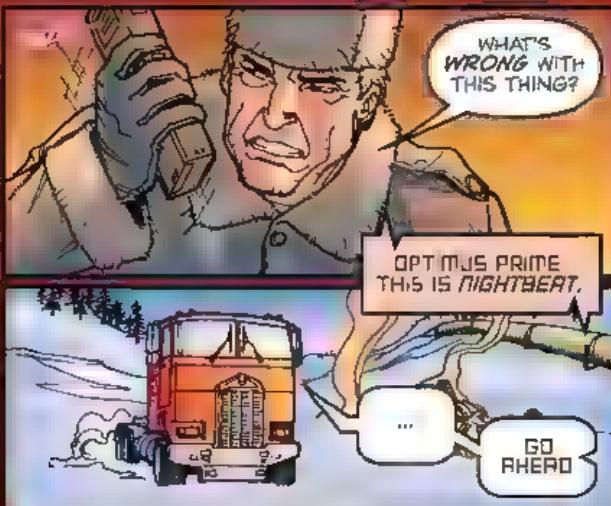
GET
ME THE
RADIO

...I'M
CALLING
THIS IN!

WHAT IS
IT? WHAT DID
YOU SEE?

NOTHING.

THIS IS CAPTAIN
TODOROF, FOURTEENTH
INFANTRY. GET ME A
SECURE LINE TO MAJOR
ARKURIN PRIORITY
ALPHA-N NE-NINE.



LET'S
FINISH THIS!

ONCE AND
FOR ALL

FORT WAYNE

DESIGN WORKS CUSTOM WHEELS

"IN A WORD..."

...WOW

MAKES MY OLD
GARAGE LOOK LIKE THE
OFF-ROAD CHOPSHOP IT
WAS. HALF THE STUFF IN
HERE I DON'T EVEN
RECOGNIZE

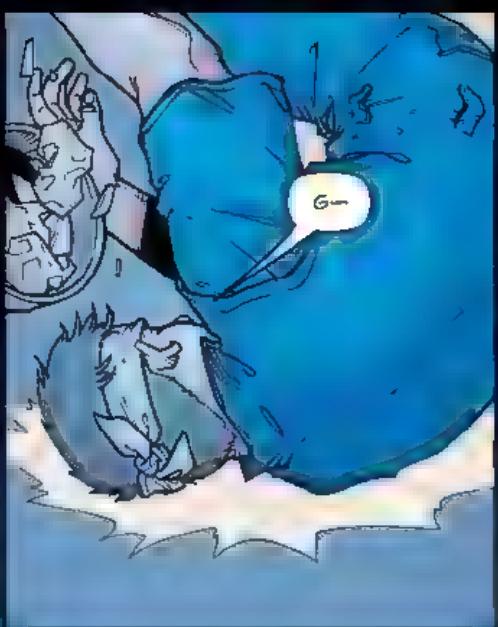
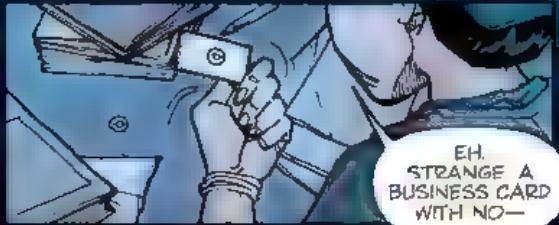
WHEN
YOU'RE DONE
SALIVATING

WE SHOULD
GET ON WITH
SEARCHING THE
PLACE Y'KNOW, FOR
SOMETHING THAT
MIGHT LEAD US
TO HUNTER.

UH, SURE.
YEAH...

LITTLE TIP
I PICKED UP FROM
READING TOO MANY
DETECTIVE NOVELS—
ALWAYS START WITH
THE TRASH

RIGHT, KNOCK
YOURSELF OUT





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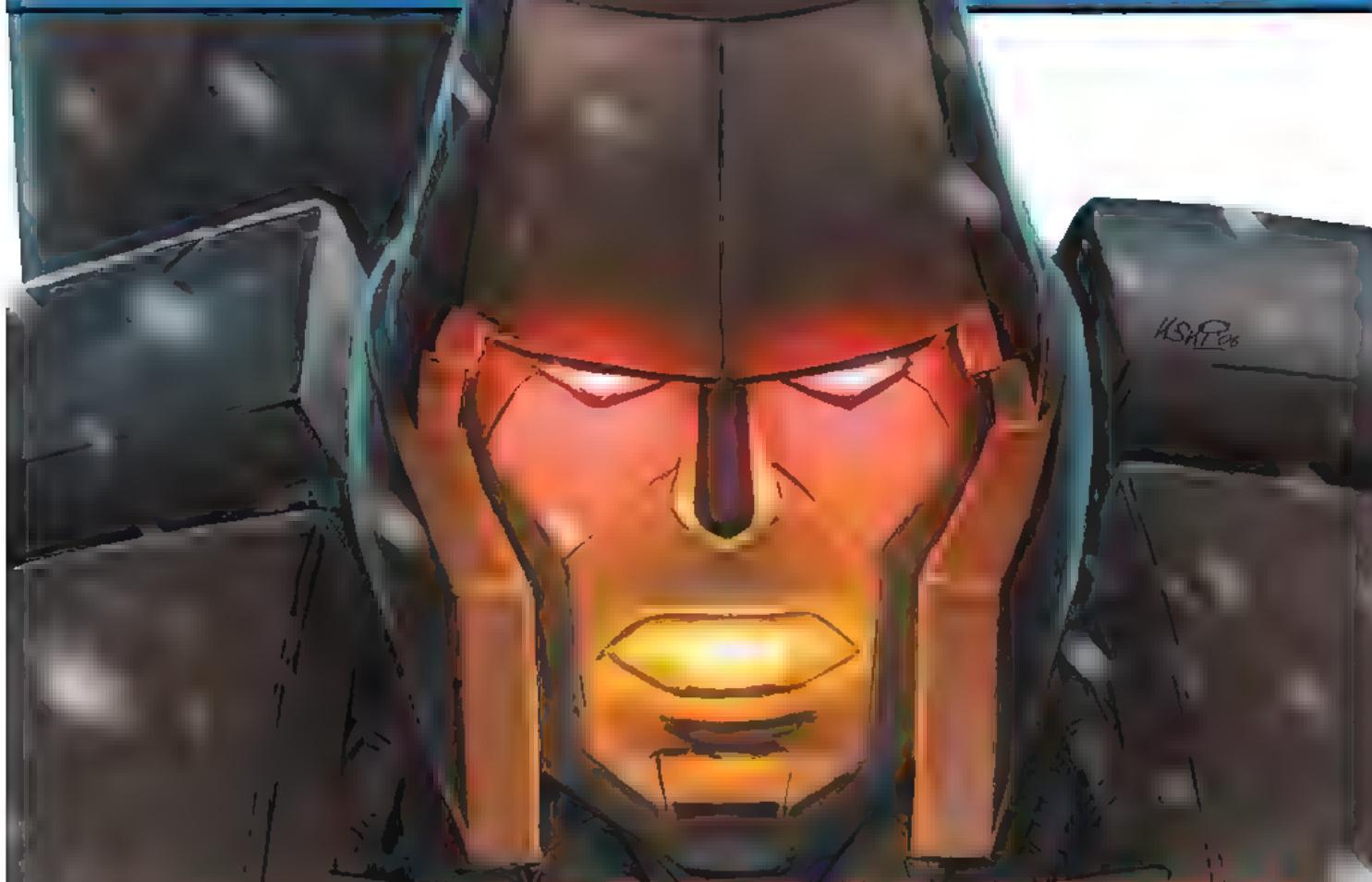
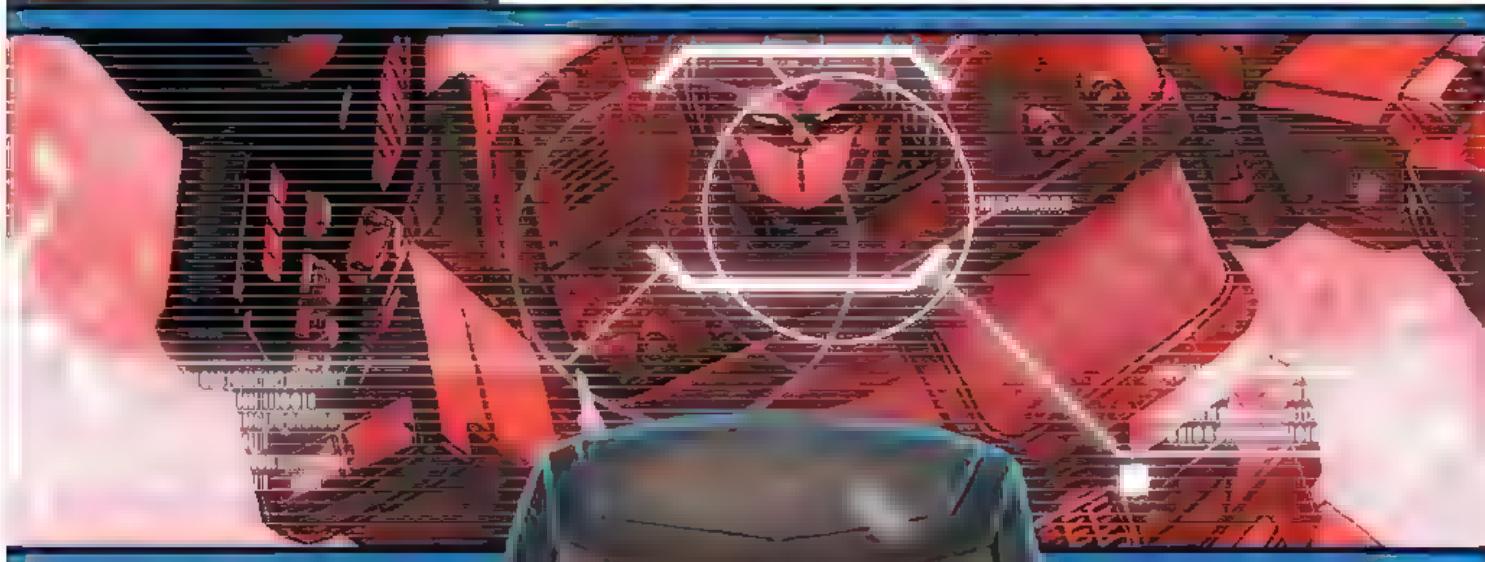
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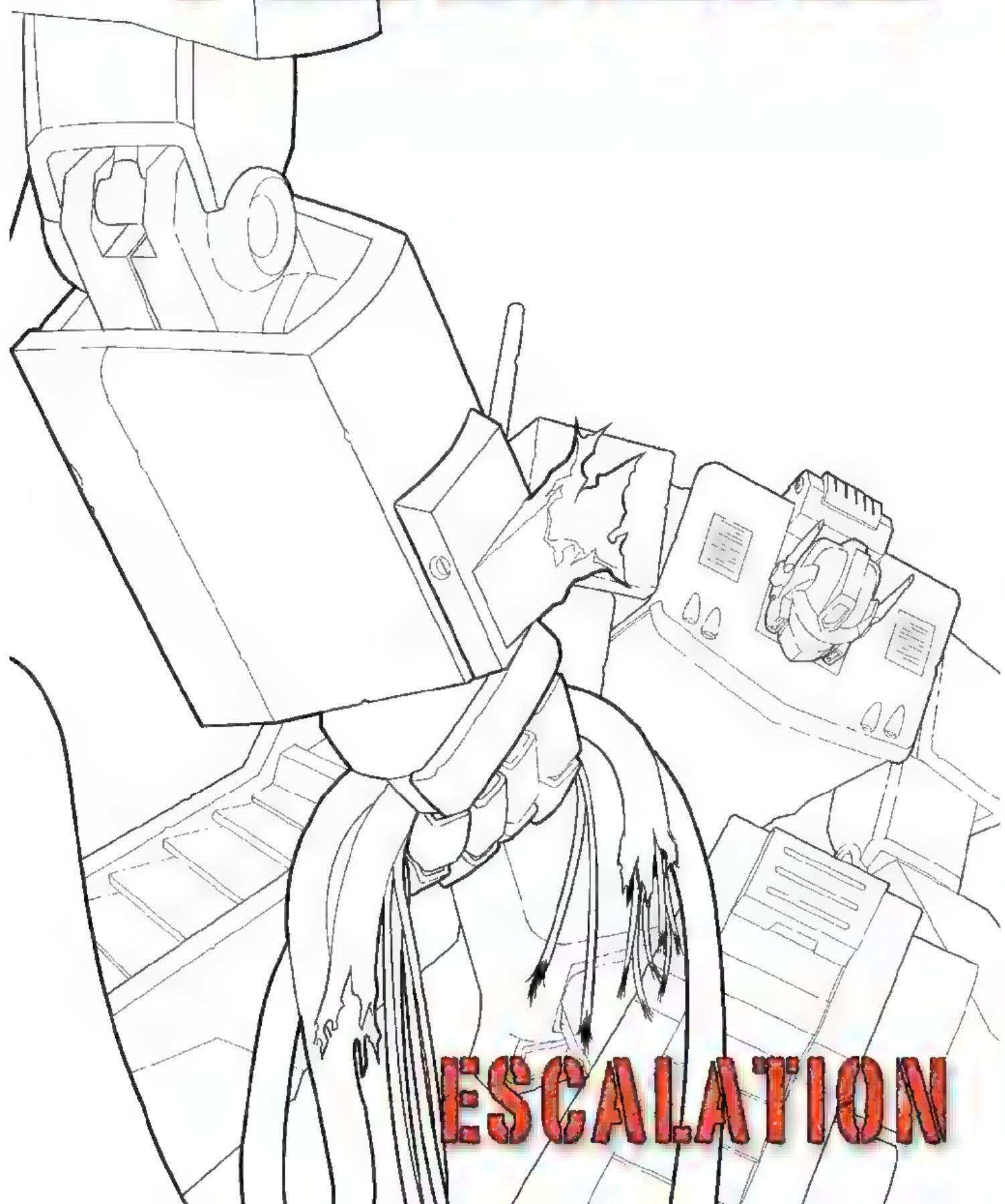
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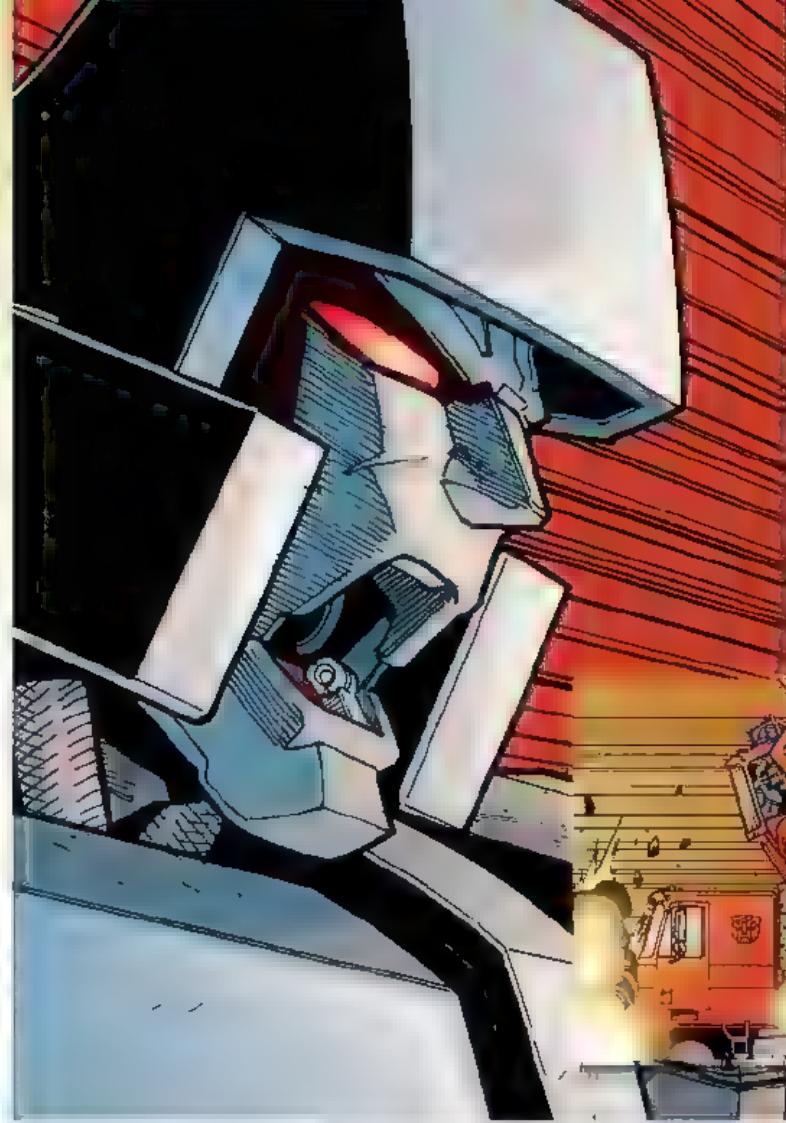
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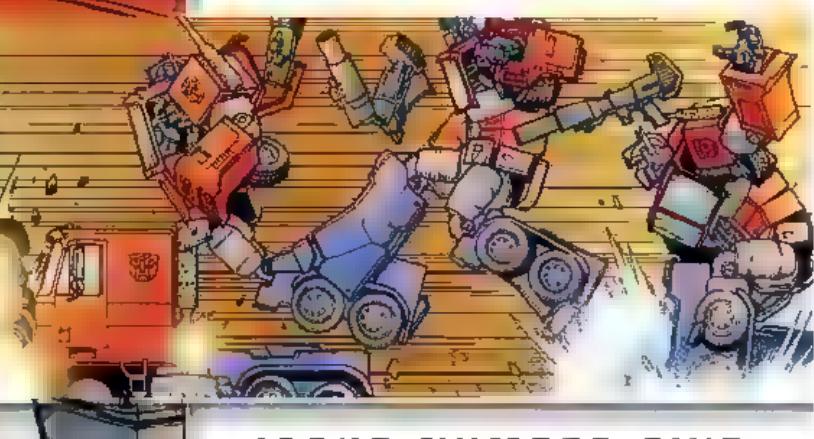
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LETTERS BY ROBBIE ROBBINS
EDITS BY CHRIS RYALL & DAN TAYLOR

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VAR ANT COVER BY KLAUS SCHERWINSKI



ISSUE NUMBER FIVE

ESCALATION

In the breakaway Russian state of Brasnya, OPTIMUS PRIME clashes with MEGATRON, while their respective (AUTOBOT and DECEPTICON) forces seek to either capture or eliminate the artificial human GEORGI KOSKA, his cellular template the key to identifying all the other facsimiles currently active on Earth. Meanwhile, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, IRONHIDE and RATCHET wait outside Custom Wheels, while VERITY CARLO and JIMMY PUNK investigate a secret underground workshop, in search of clues to the whereabouts of the abducted SUNSTREAKER and HUNTER O'NION.

PHASE TWO CONTINUES...



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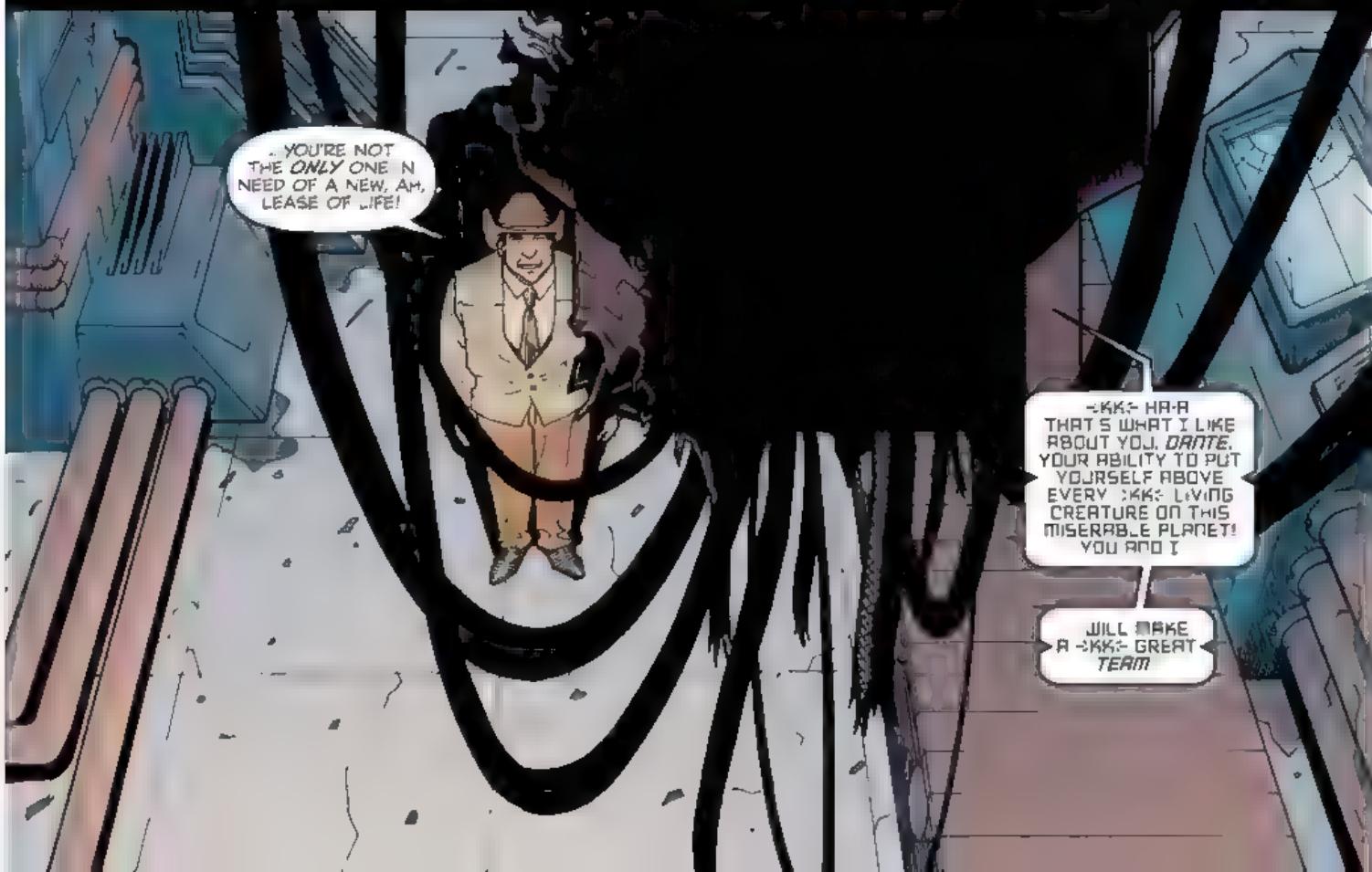
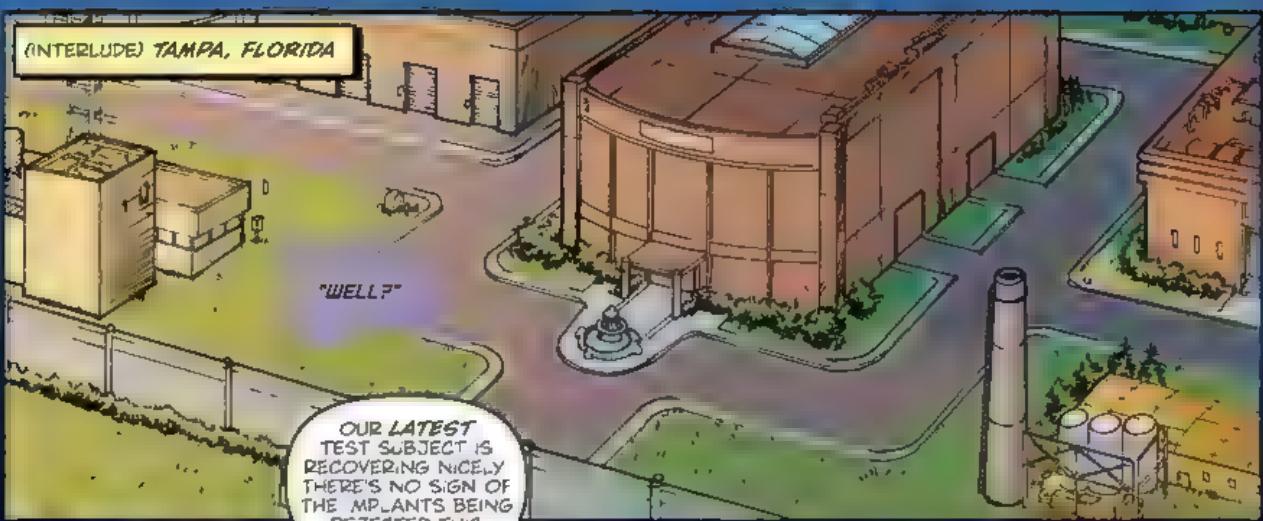
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RUSSIAN STATE OF BRASNYA.

WAHAHAH

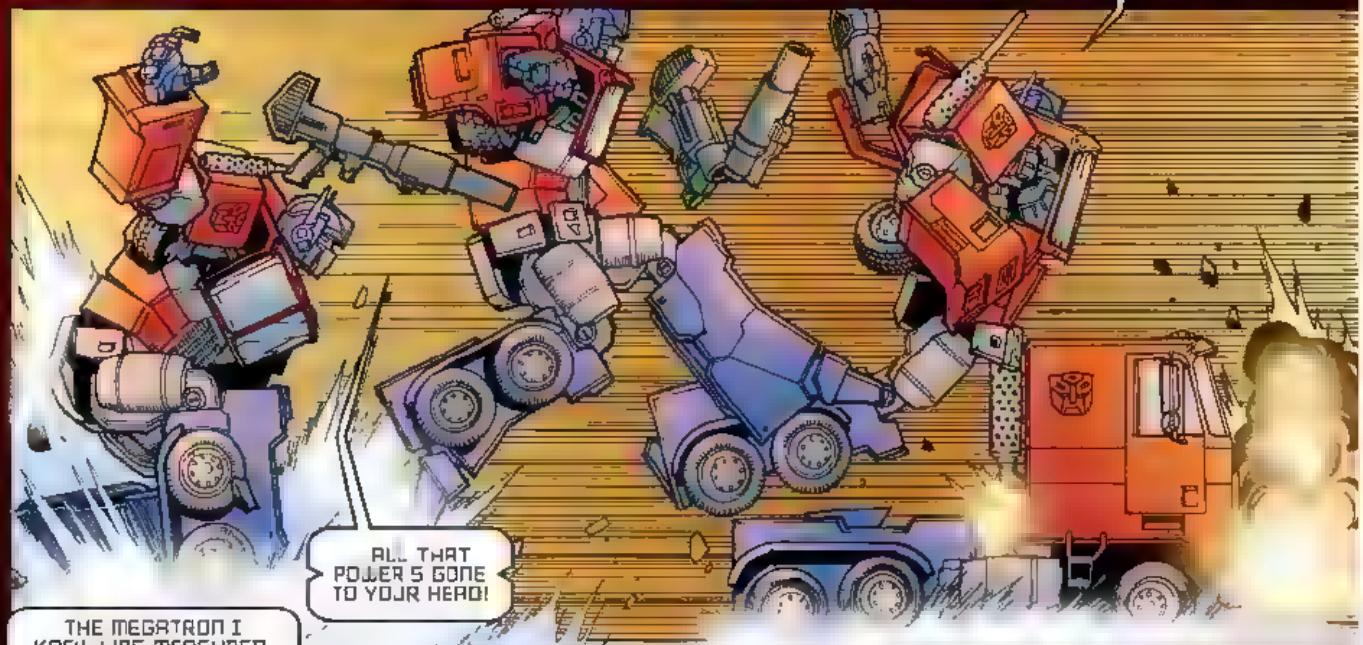
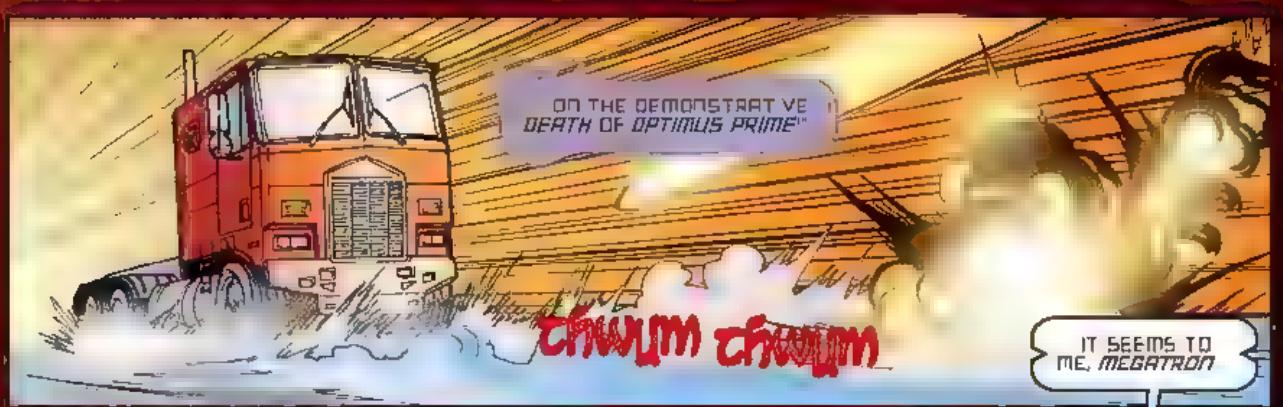
IT'S BEEN FAR TOO LONG.

SINCE I REALLY CUT LOOSE!

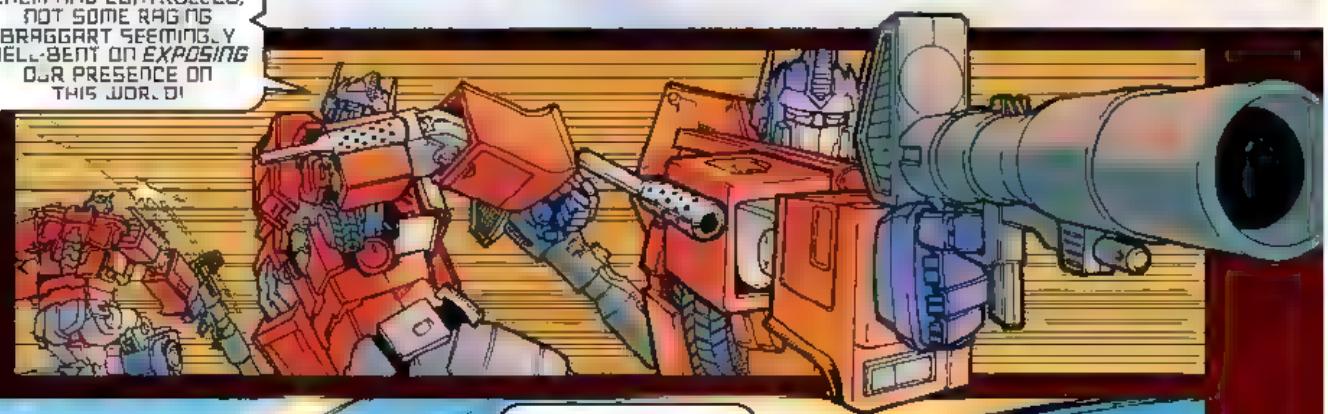
THE ONLY DOWNSIDE OF A COMMAND LEVEL EX STENCE

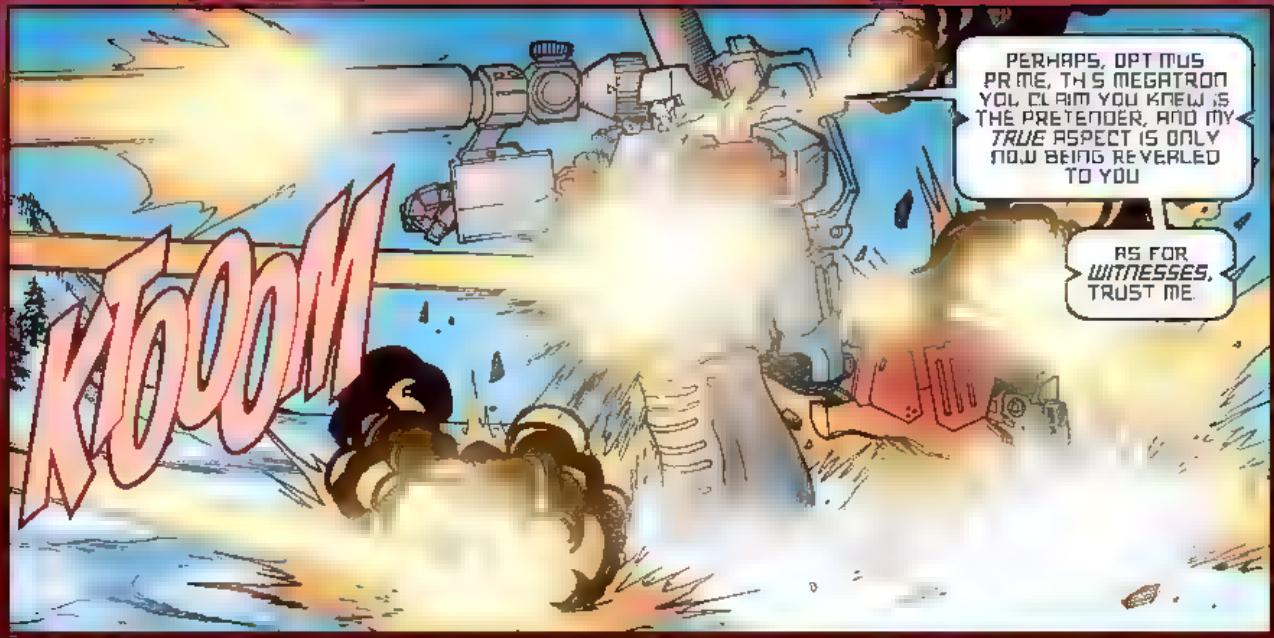
AT LEAST NOW, THANKS TO THE WONDER OF STARScream's ORE-13, I CAN EXPEND AS MUCH ENERGY AS I LIKE.

SHAAOOO



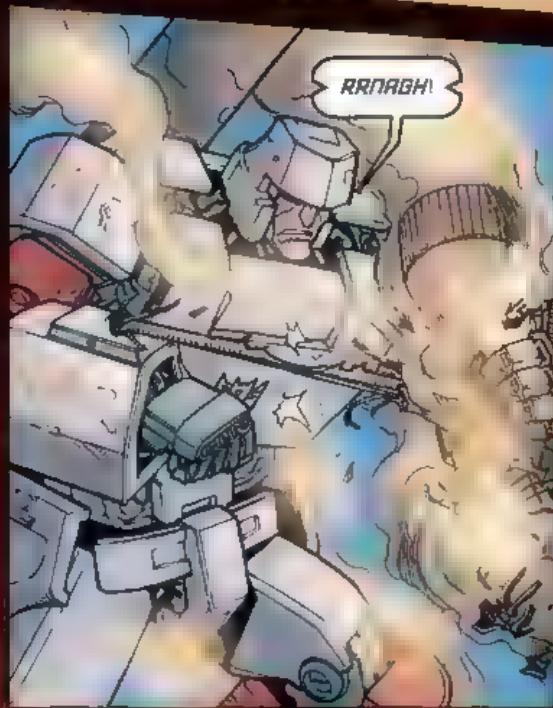
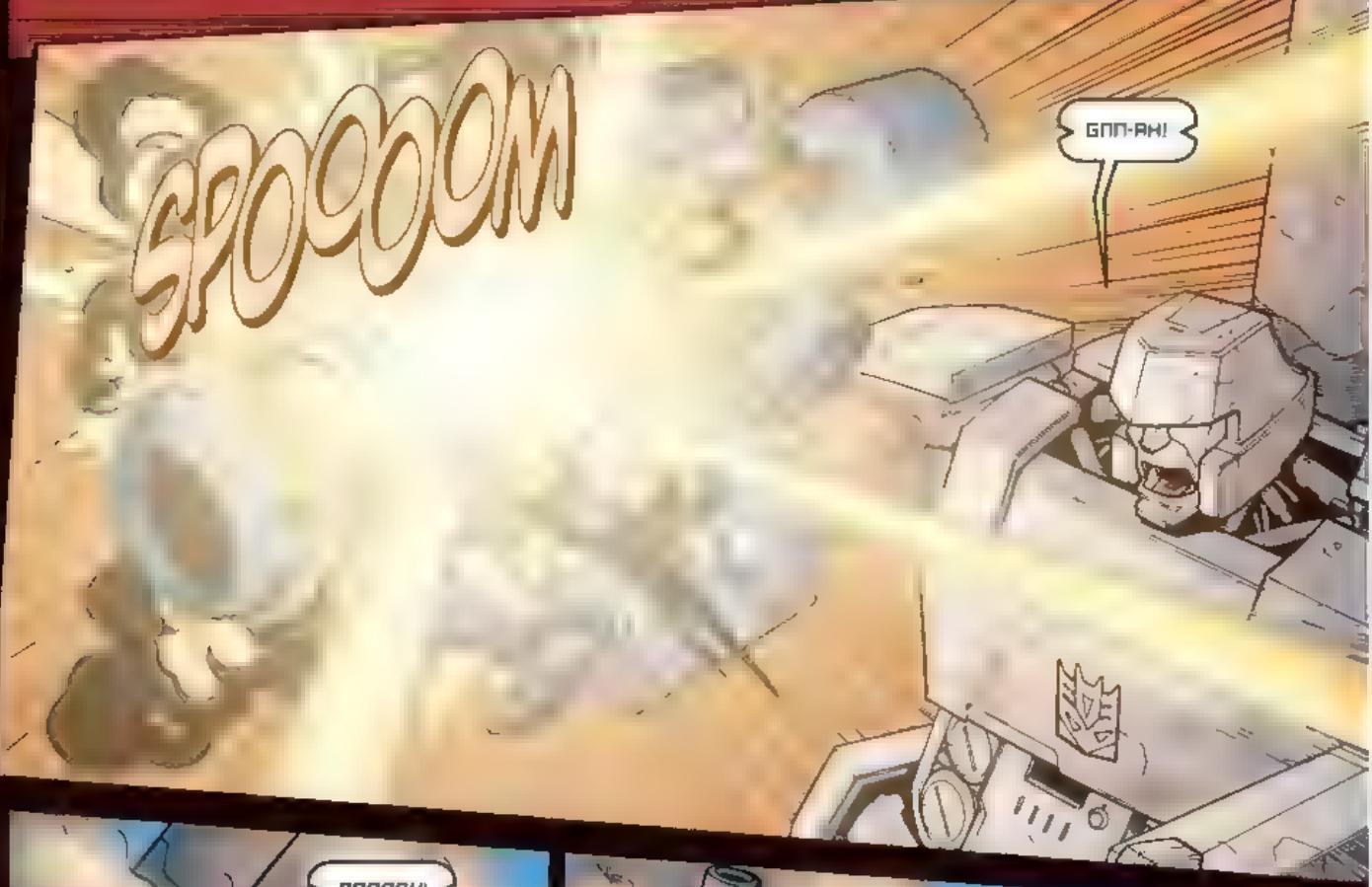
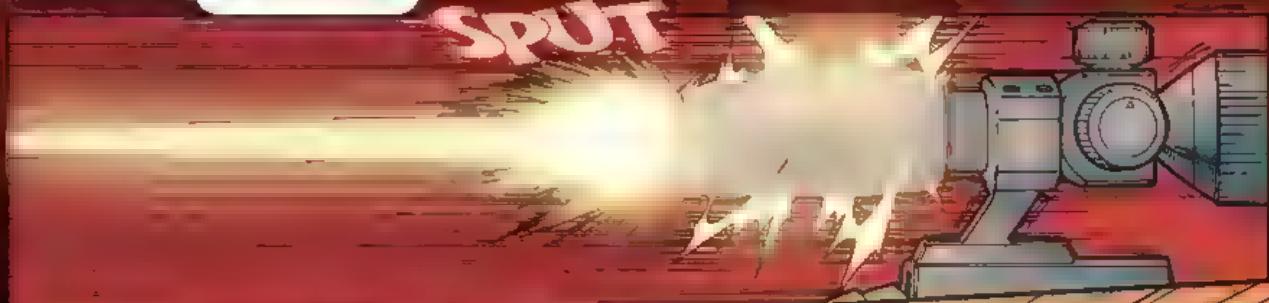
THE MEGATRON I
KNEW WAS MEASURED,
CALM AND CONTROLLED.
NOT SOME RAGING
BRAGGART SEEMINGLY
HELL-BENT ON EXPOSING
OUR PRESENCE ON
THIS WORLD.



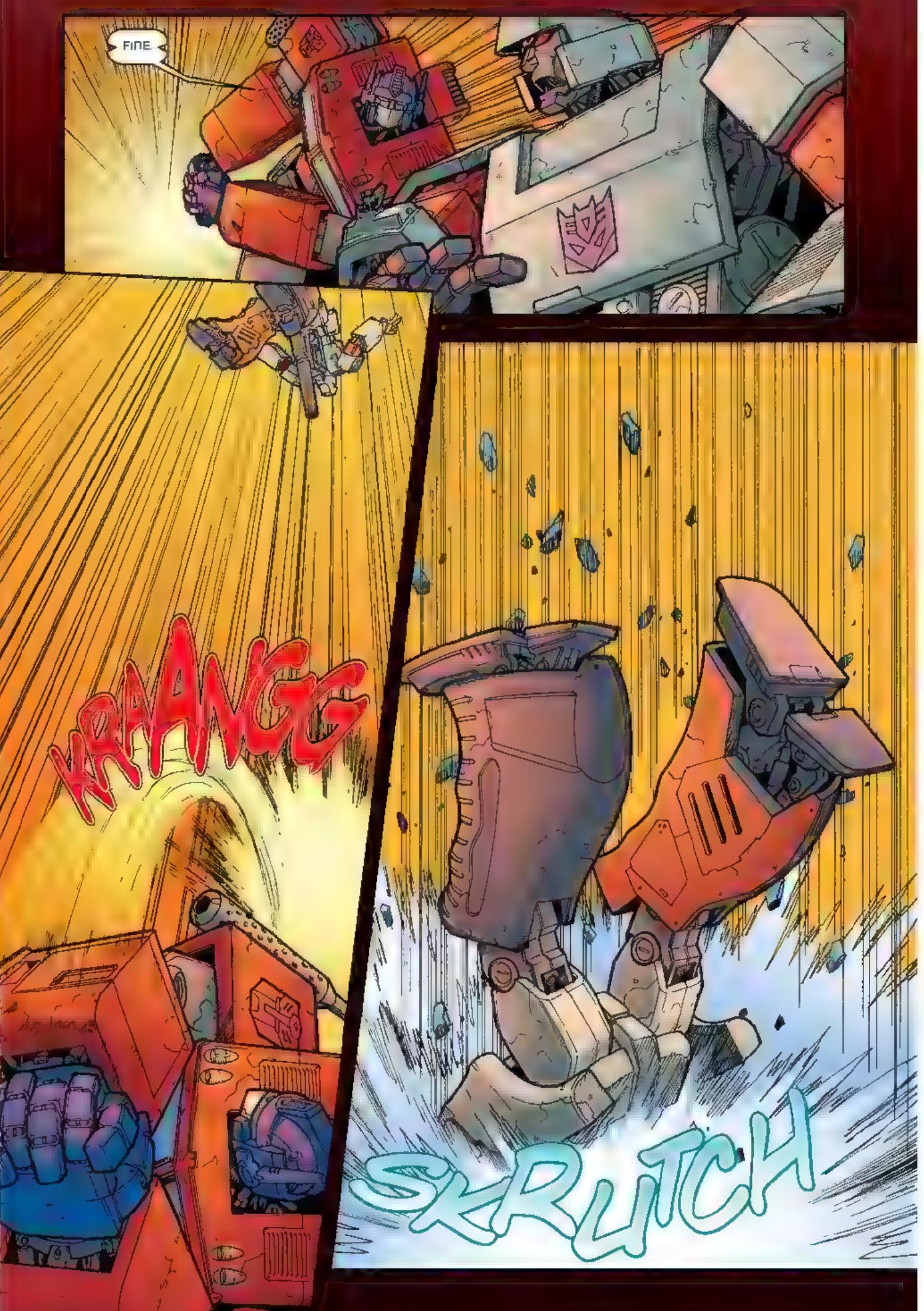


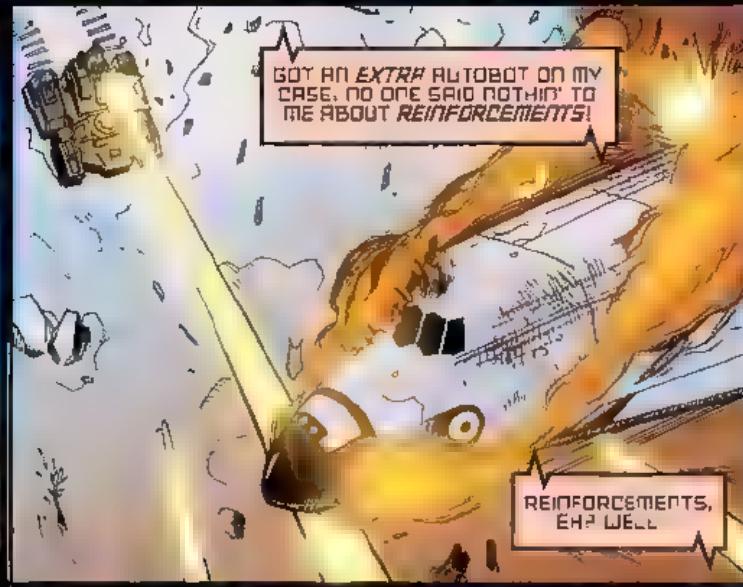


SPUR

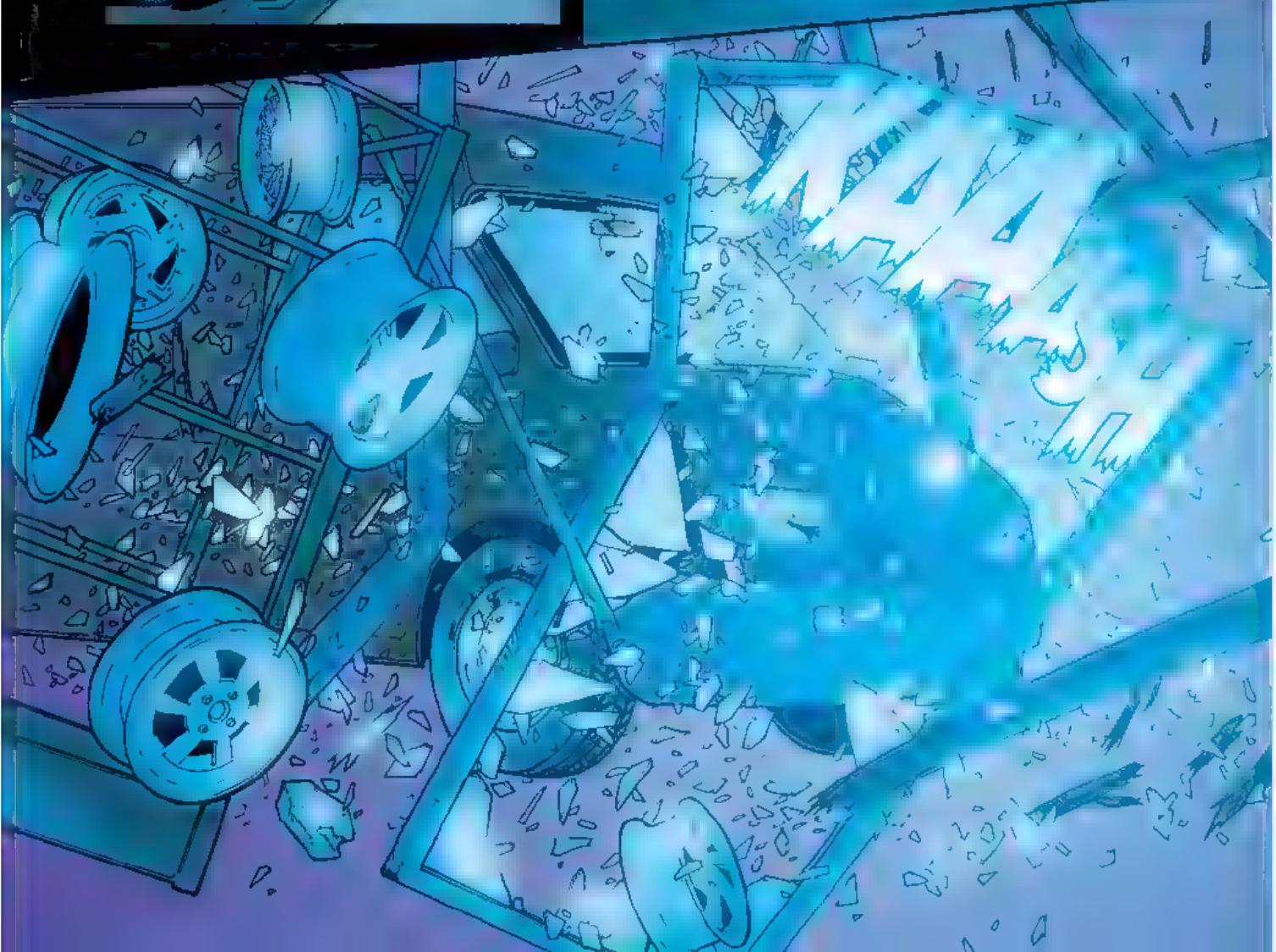


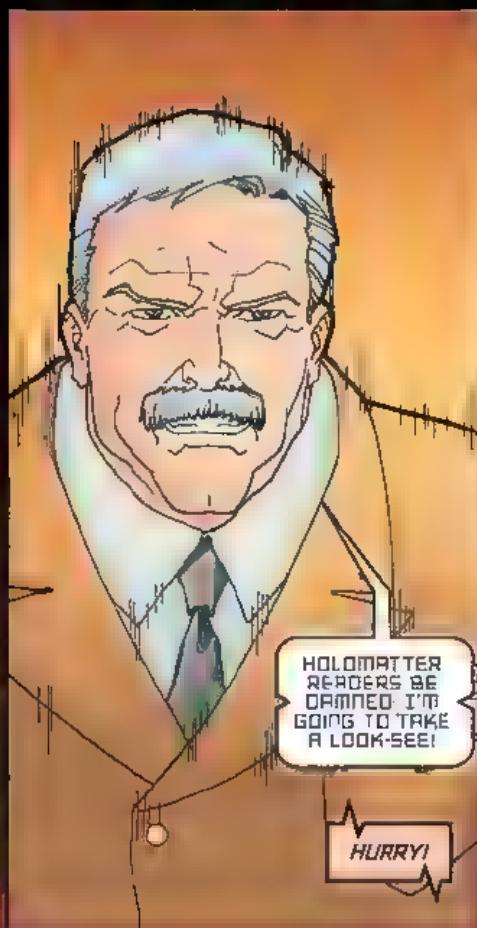
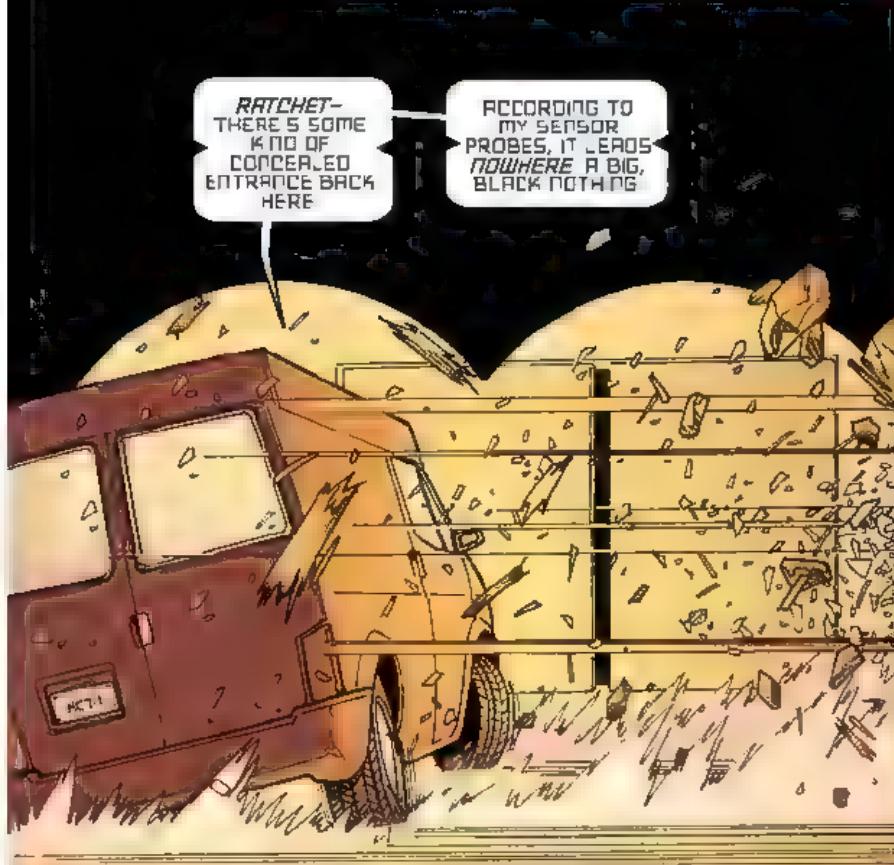
FINE.

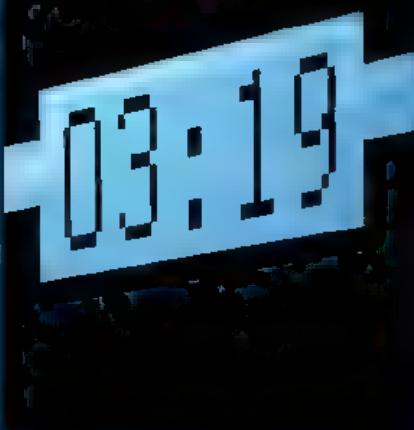
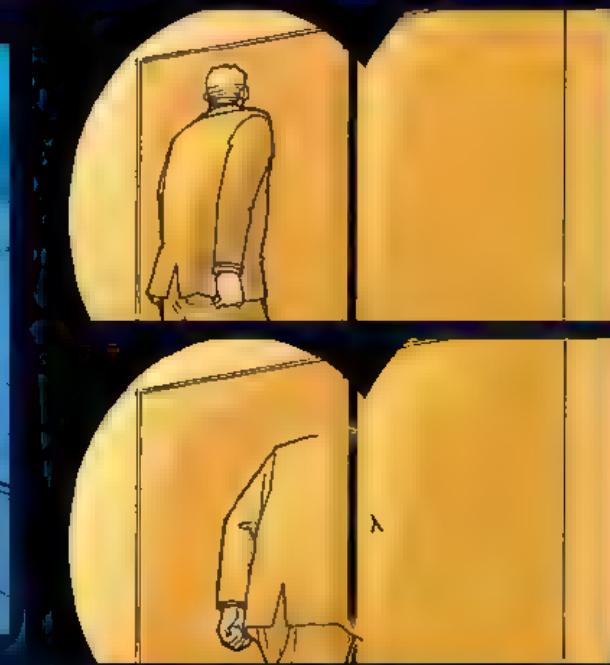


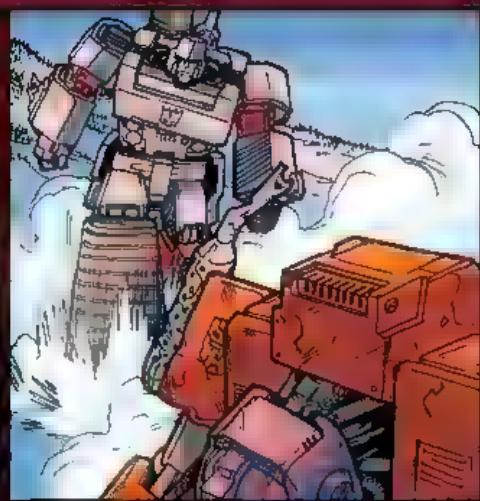
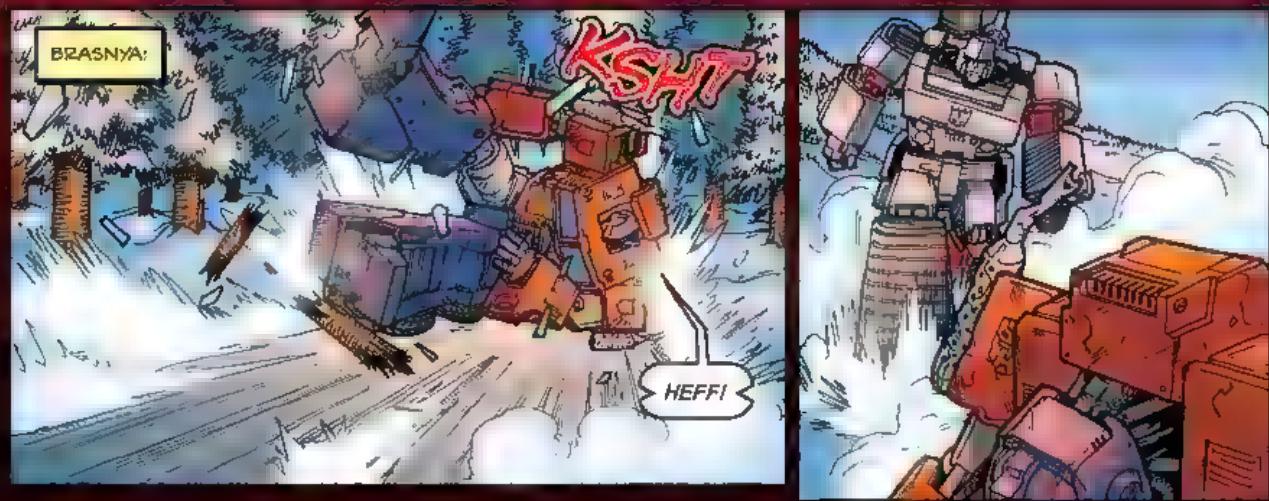










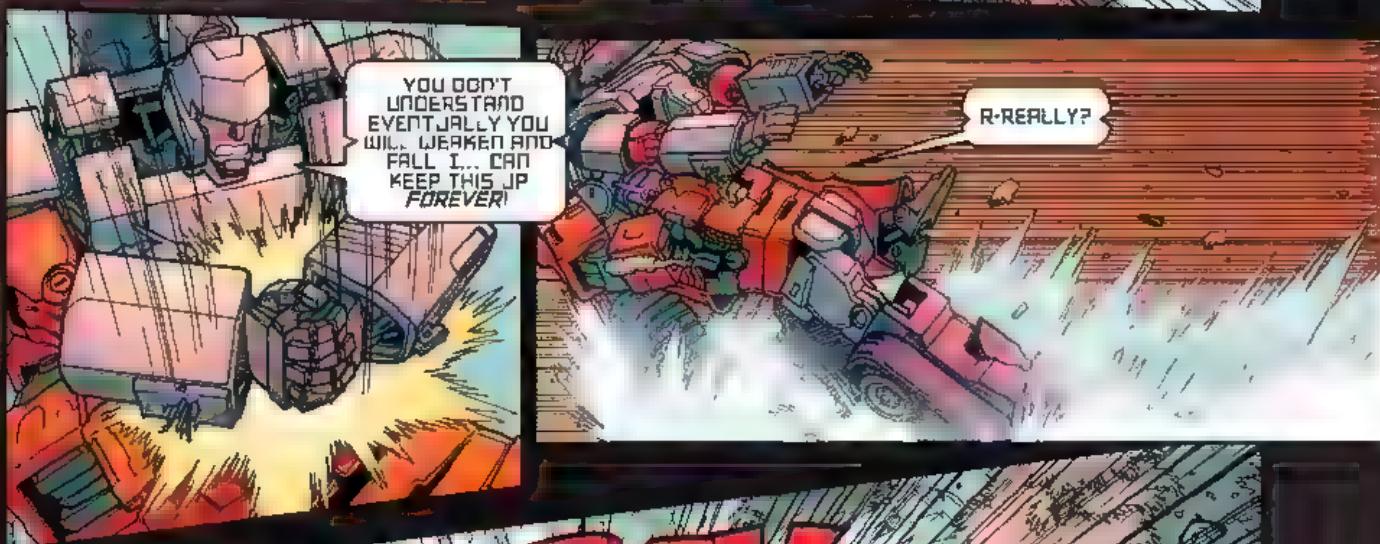


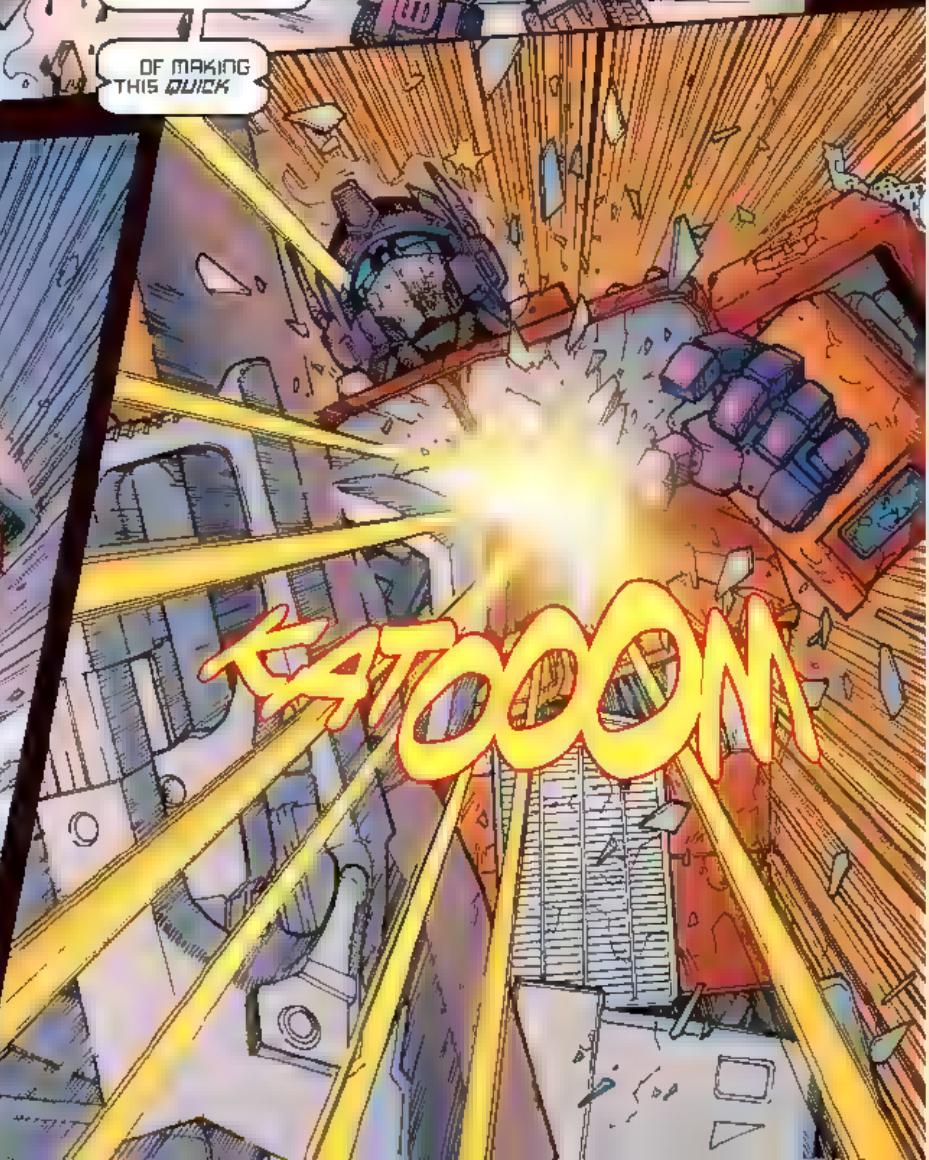
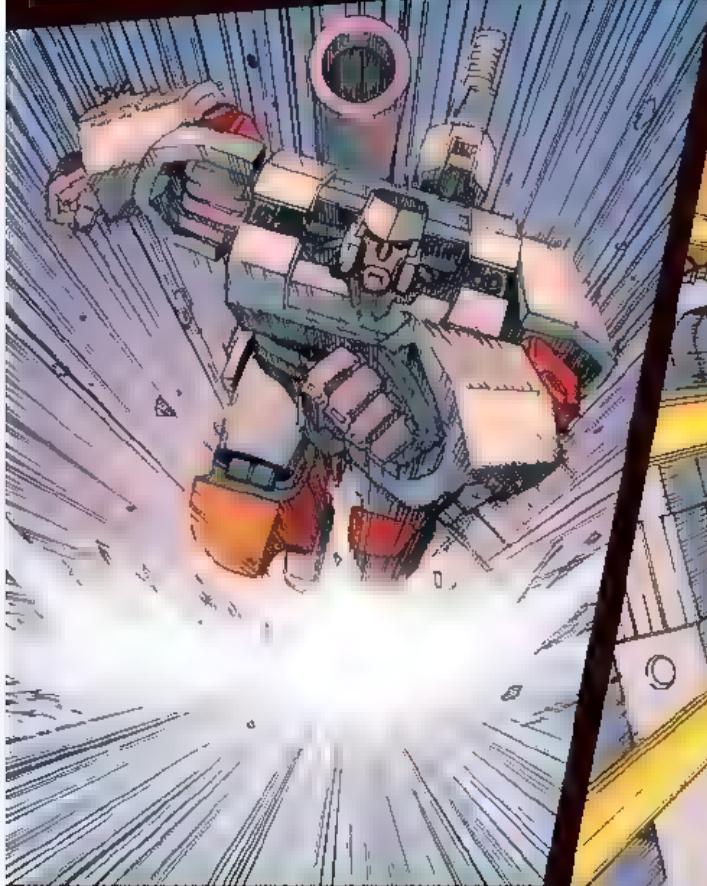
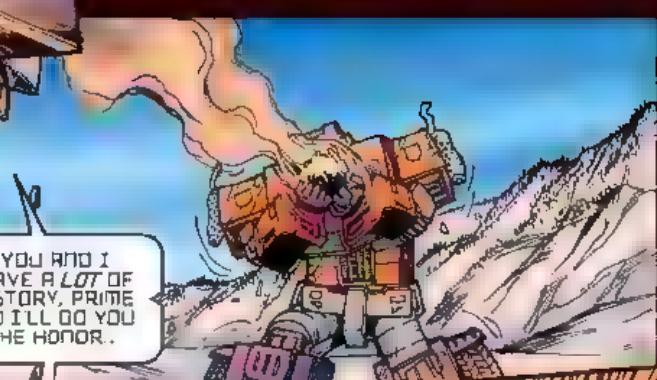


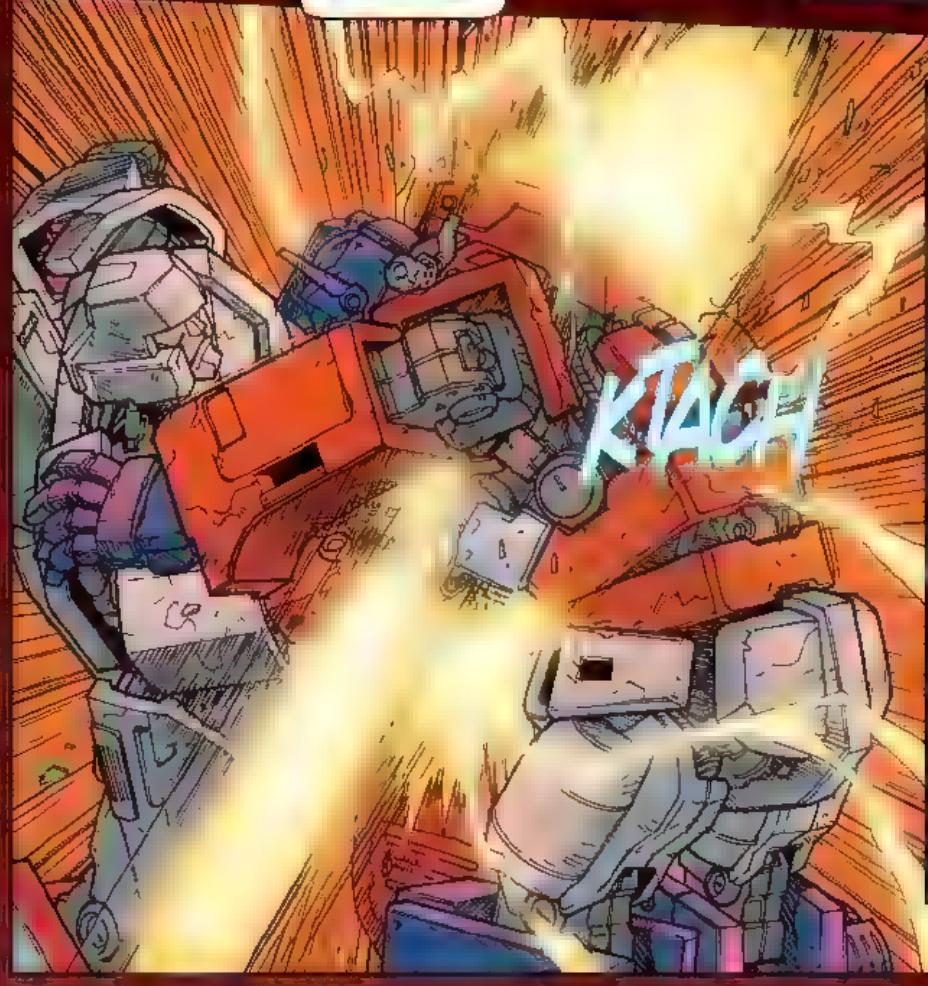
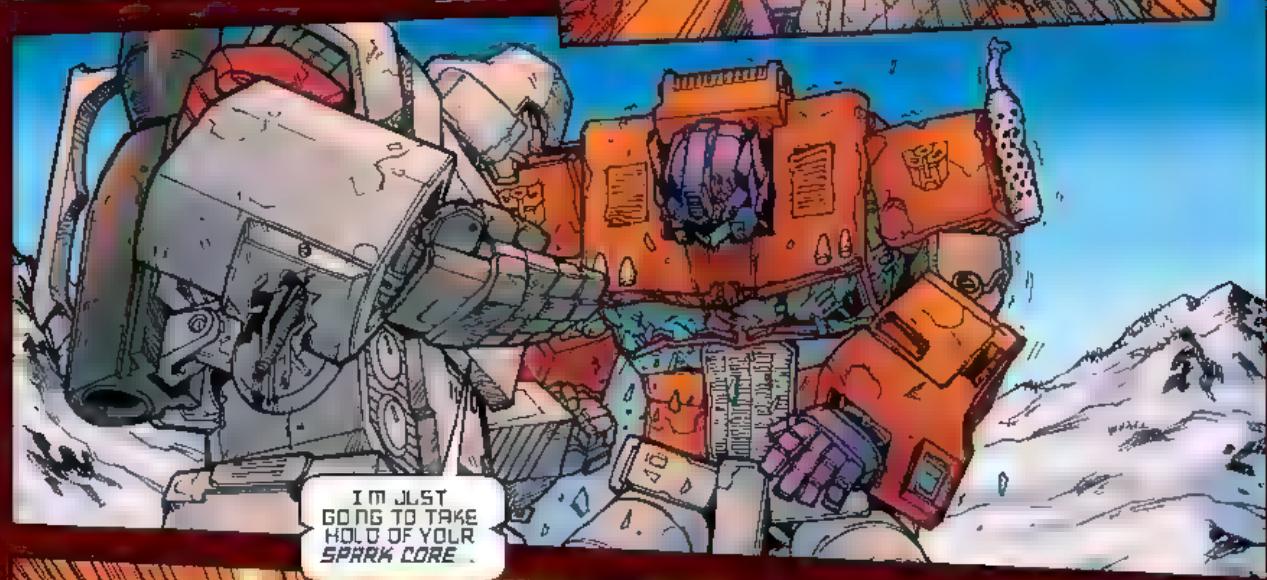
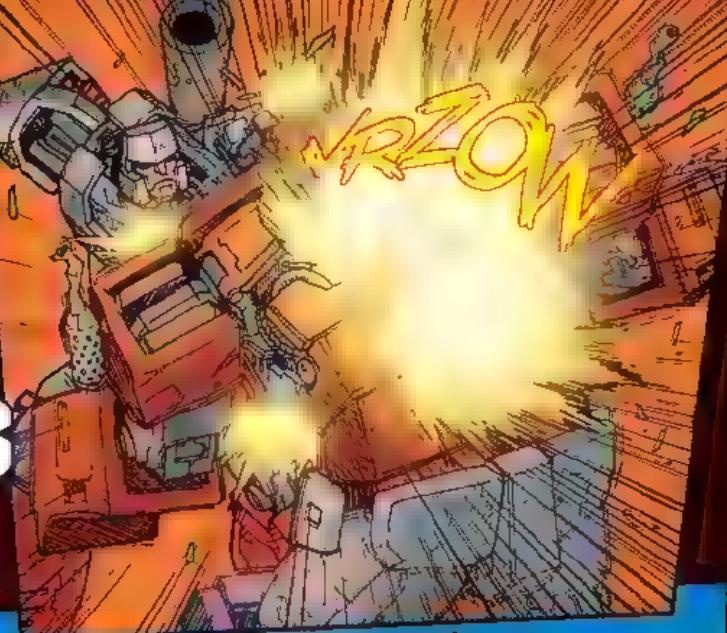
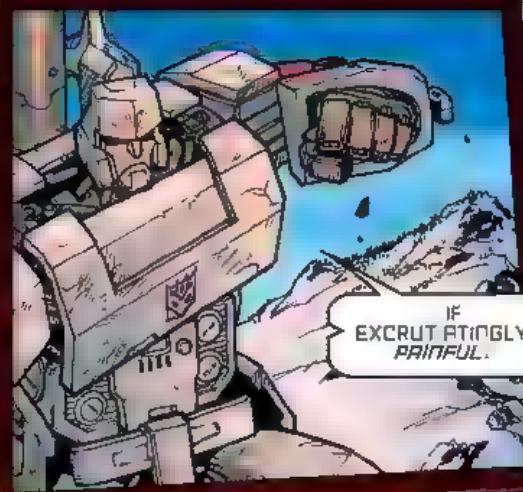
AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, ALL THIS DRE-13 HAS DONE

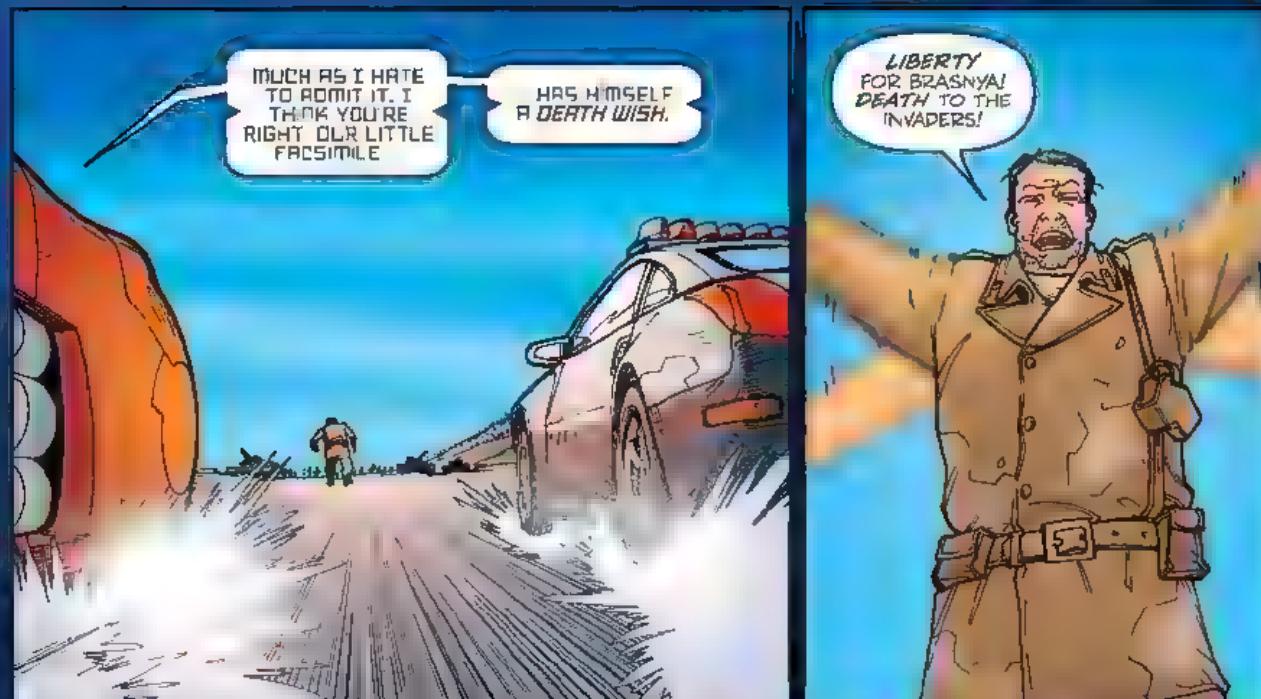
IS LOOSEN YOUR VOCAL ROUTERS!

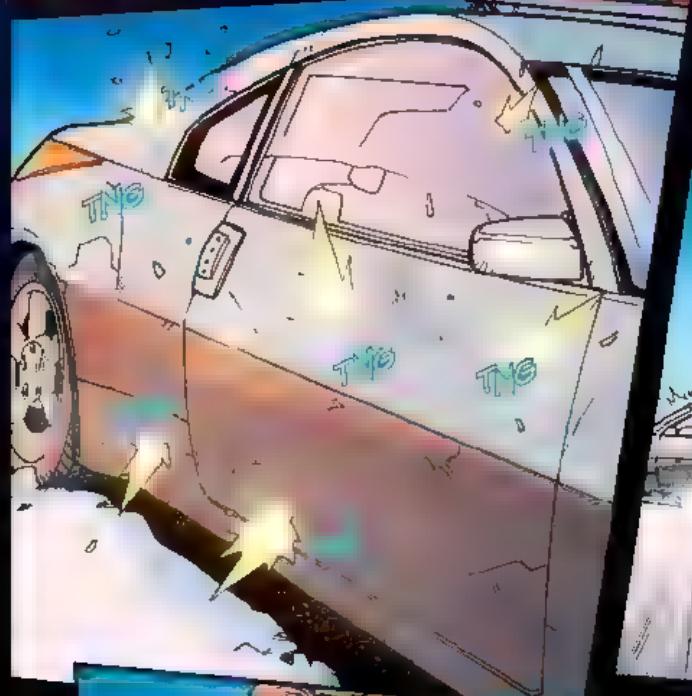
TANG
TANG

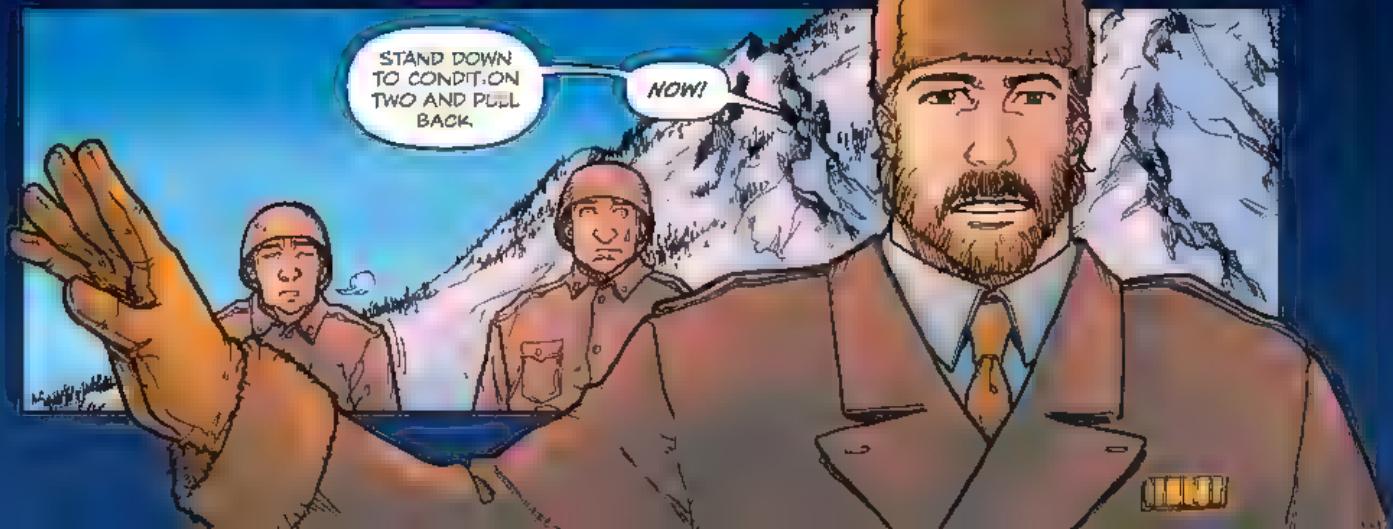
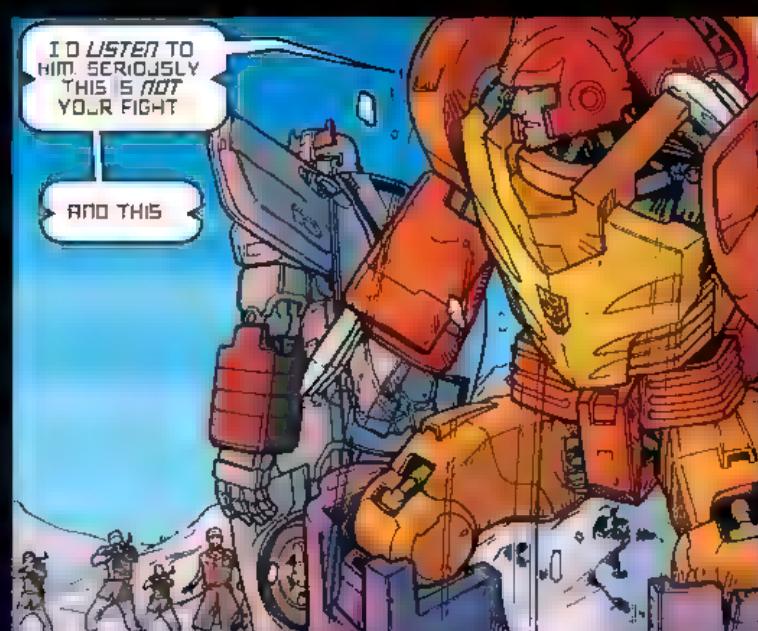


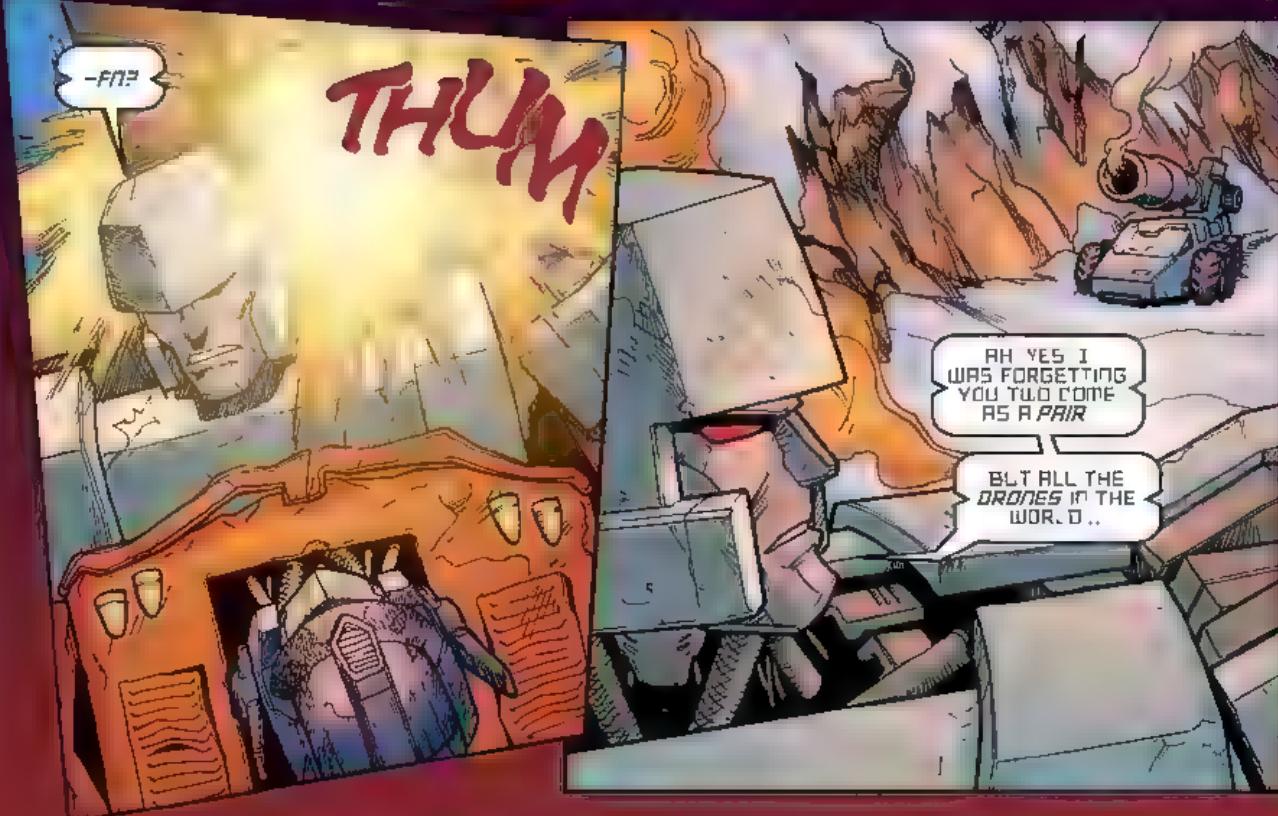
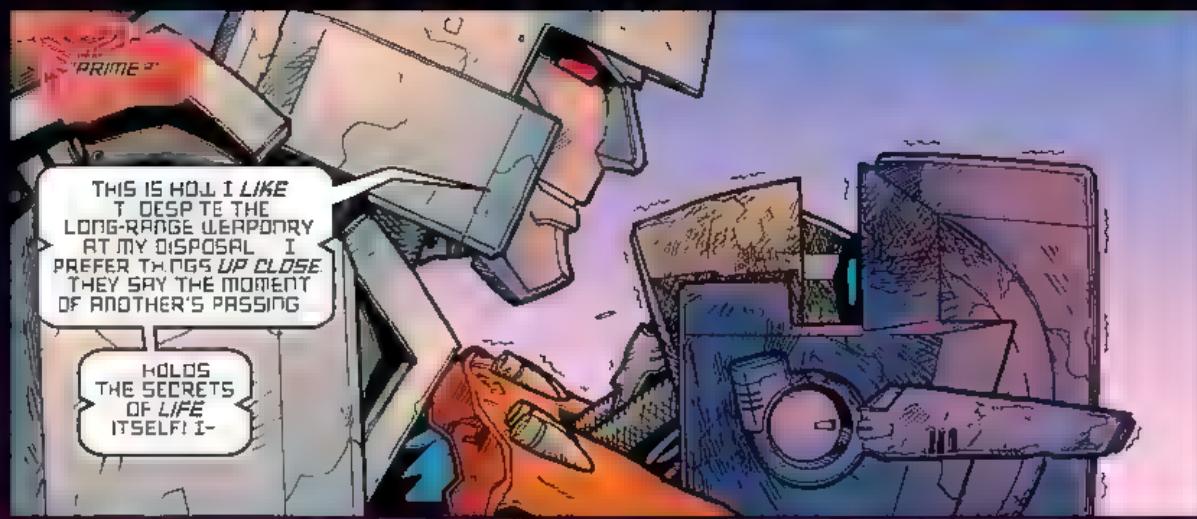
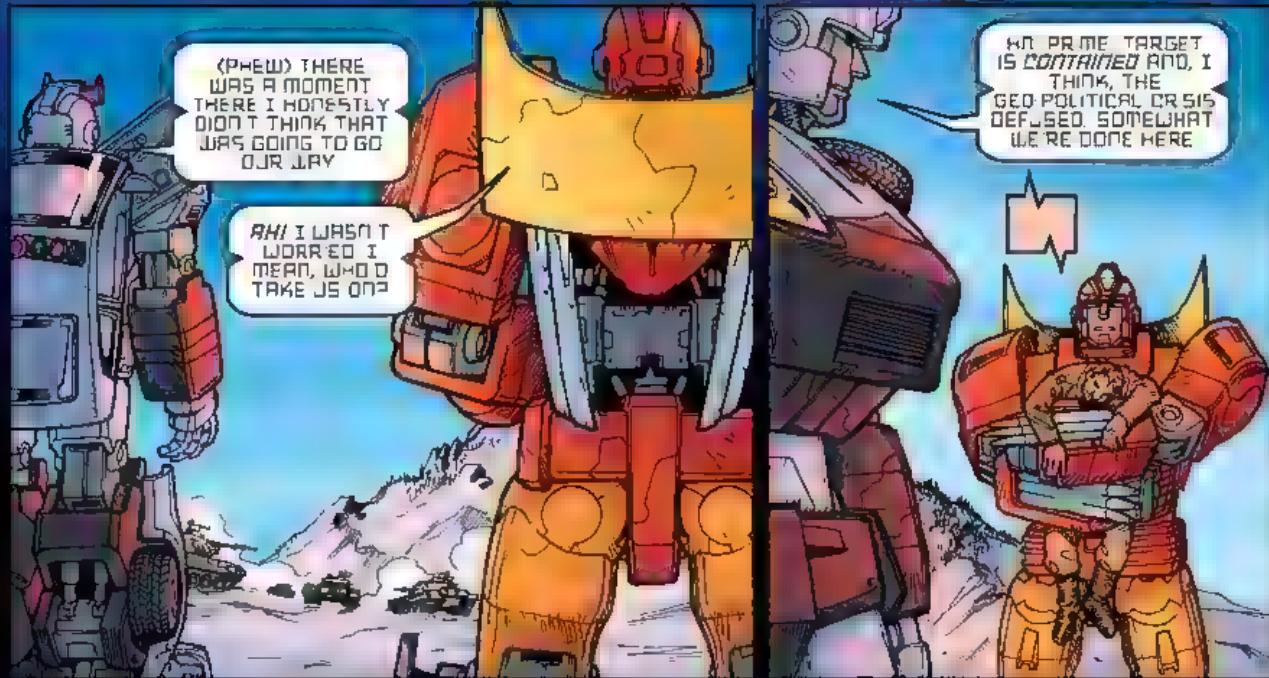


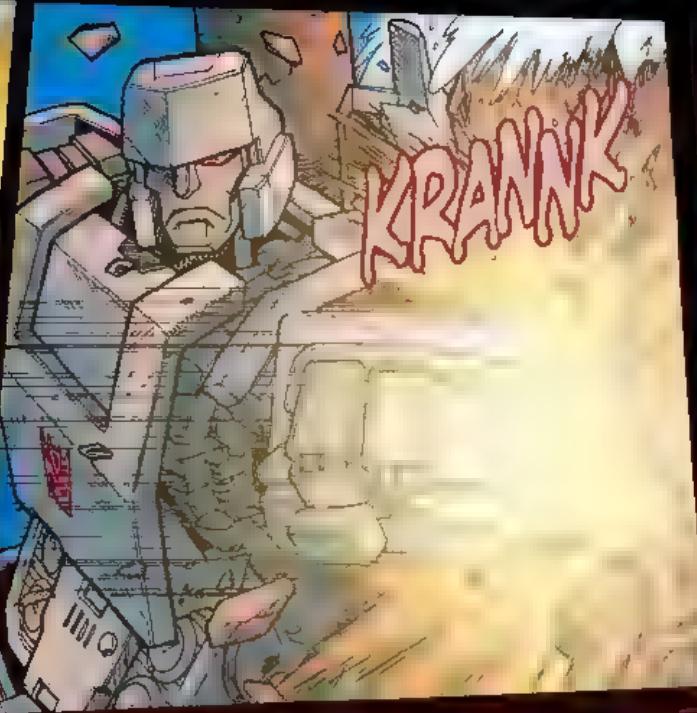
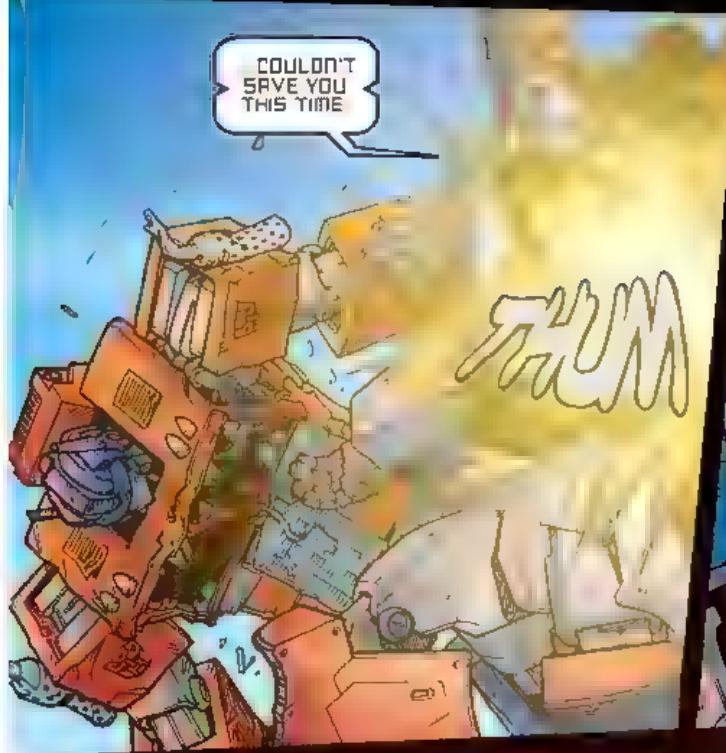












(INTERLUDE) EUREKA, NEVADA

WHAT'S GOING ON? CLIVE?







THE TRANSFORMERS

ESCALATION

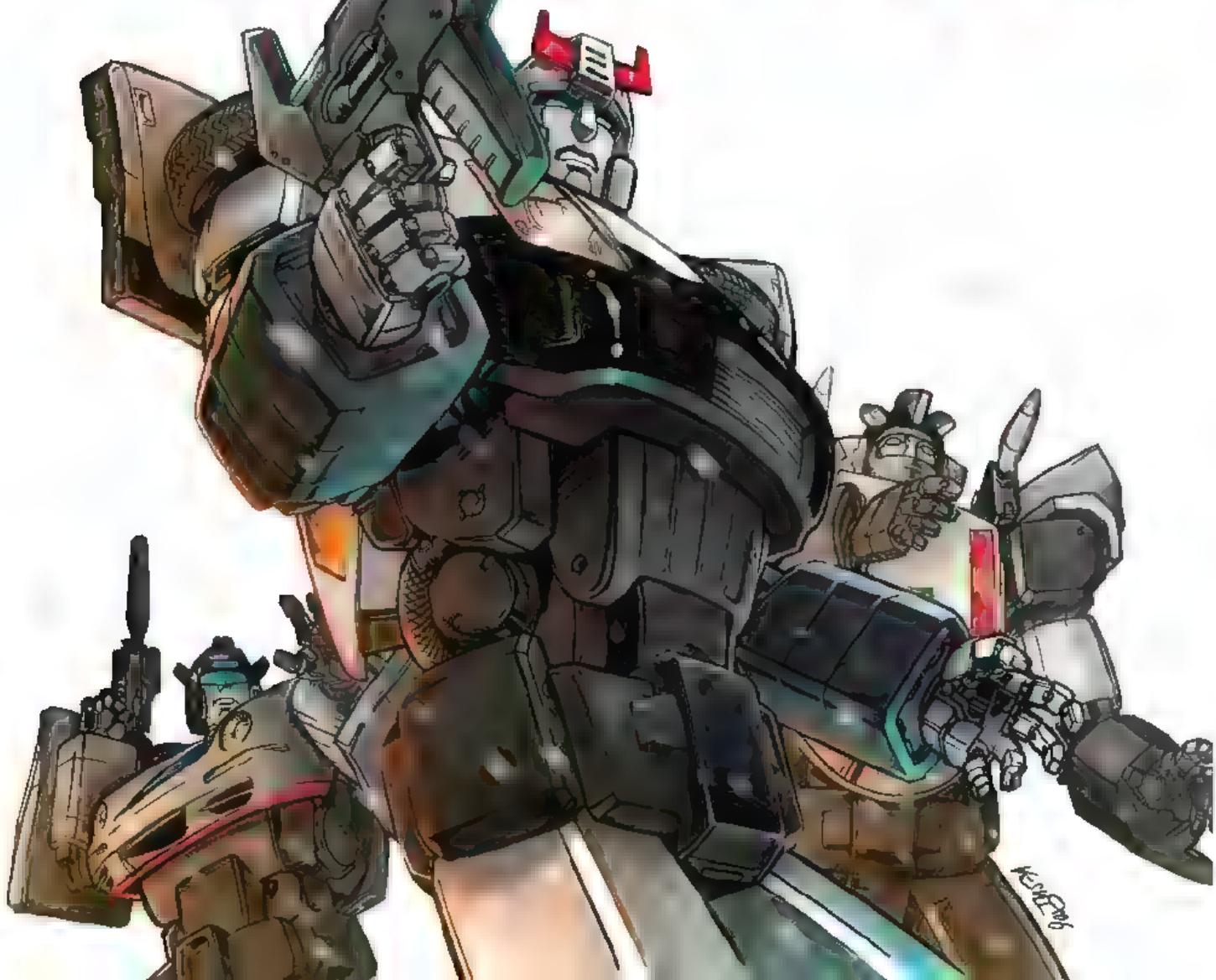




THE TRANSFORMERS™



ESCALATION



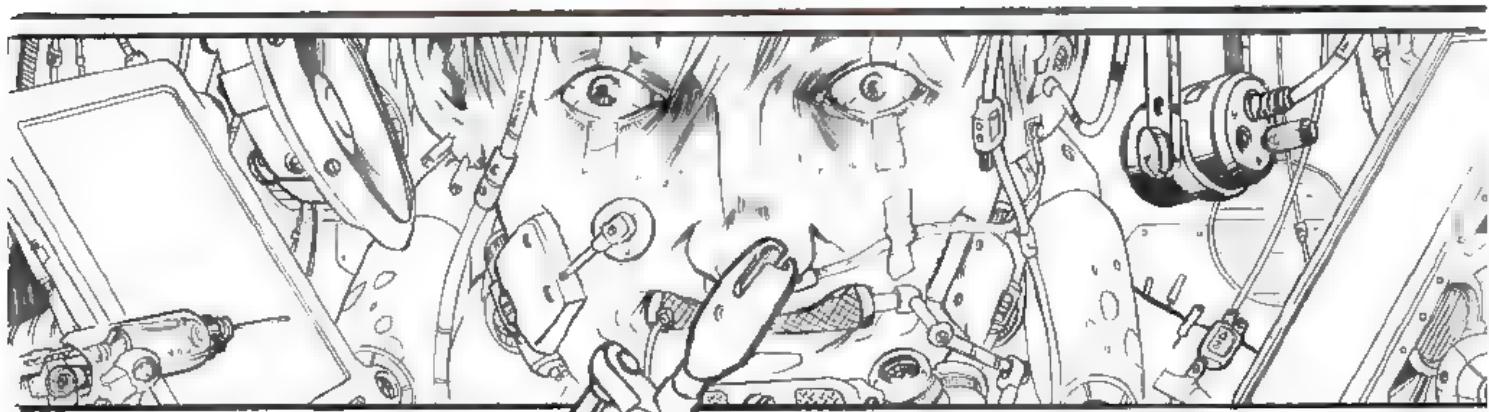


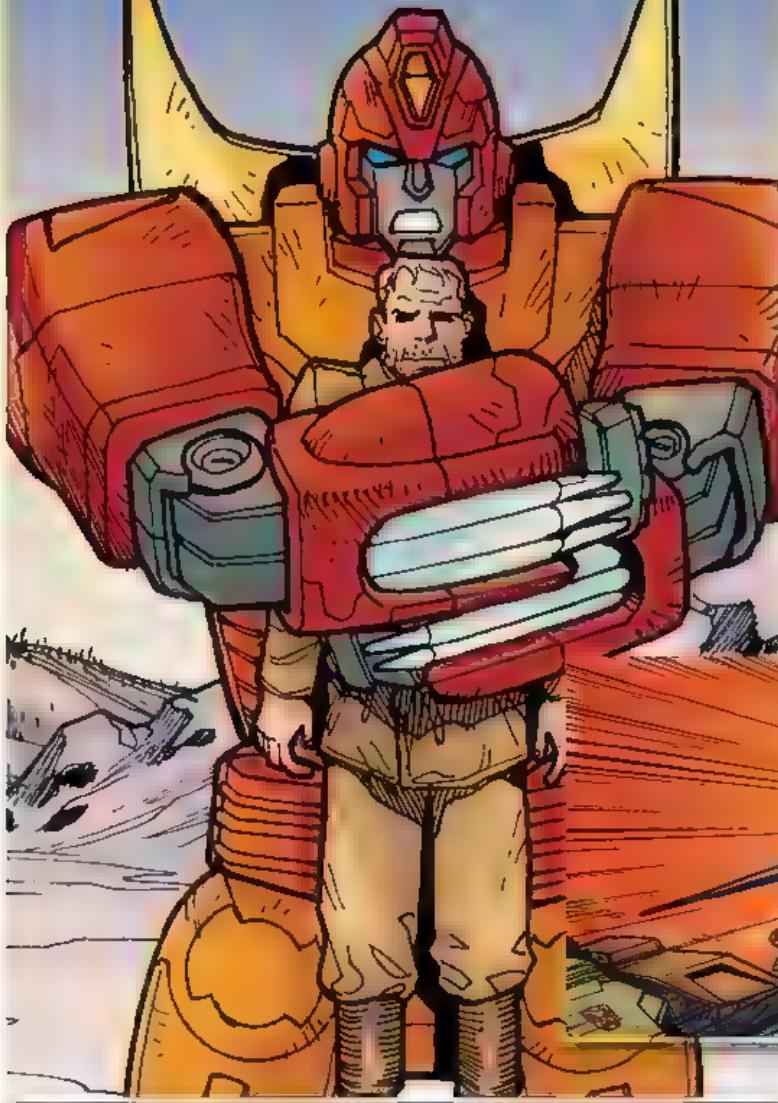
THE TRANSFORMERS ESCALATION





THE TRANSFORMERS™ ESCALATION





THE TRANSFORMERS™ ESCALATION

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COLORS BY ZAC ATKINSON
LETTERS BY ROBBIE ROBBINS
EDITS BY CHRIS RYALL & DAN TAYLOR

COVER BY E.J. SU
VARIANT COVER BY KLAUS SCHERWINSKI

ISSUE NUMBER SIX

ESCALATION

The no-holds-barred battle between OPTIMUS PRIME and MEGATRON in Brasnya has ended with the apparent death of the AUTOBOT Commander-in-Chief. Meanwhile, OPTIMUS PRIME's troops fight on, the precious facsimile cargo (in the shape of dissident GEORGI KOSKA) now in the hands of HOT ROD and PROWL. And in Fort Wayne Indiana IRONHIDE and RATCHET attempt to extricate the trapped and unconscious VERITY CARLO and J MMY P NK from a Machination sub-basement before the countdown to detonation reaches zero...

PHASE TWO CONCLUDES...



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Special thanks to Hasbro's Aaron Archer, Elizabeth Griffin, Sheri Lucci and Richard Zambarano for their invaluable assistance.

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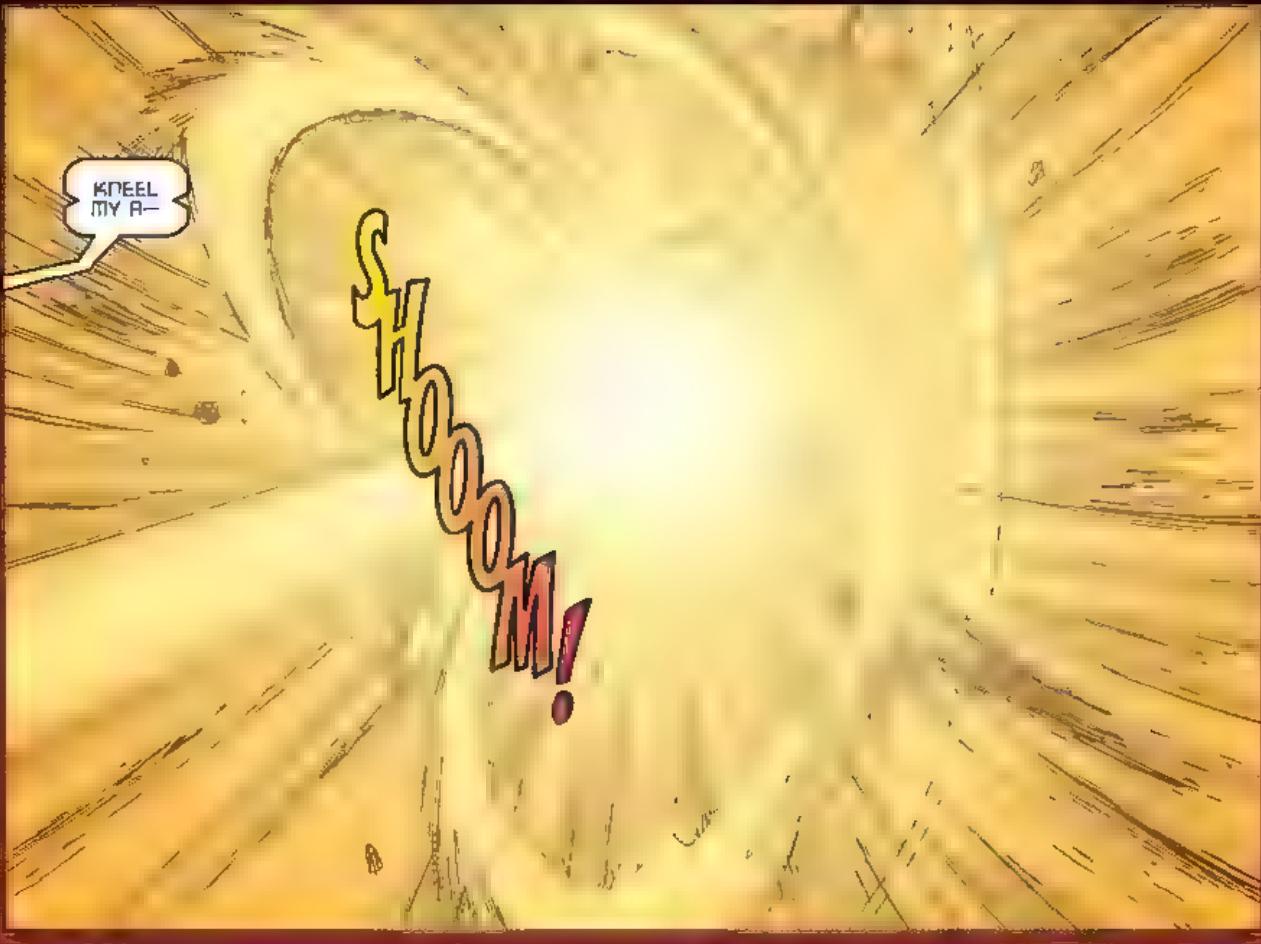
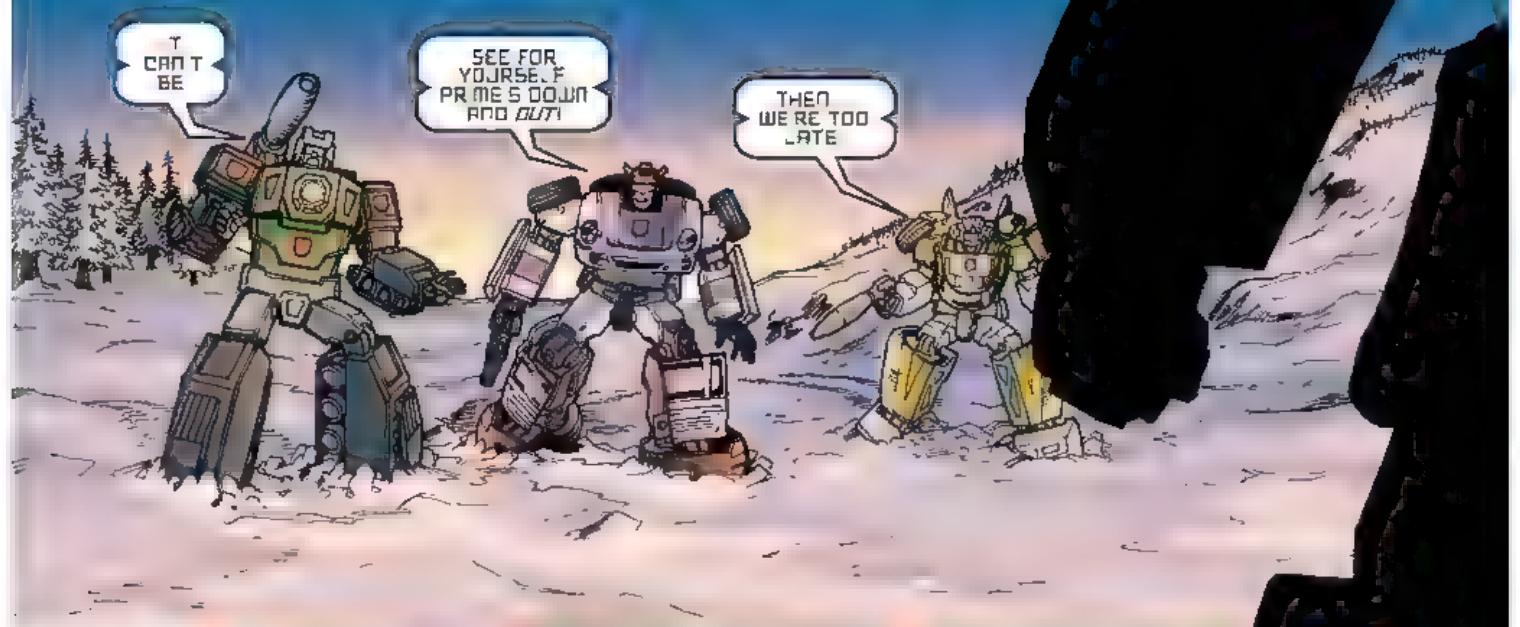
FORMER RUSSIAN
STATE OF BRASNYA

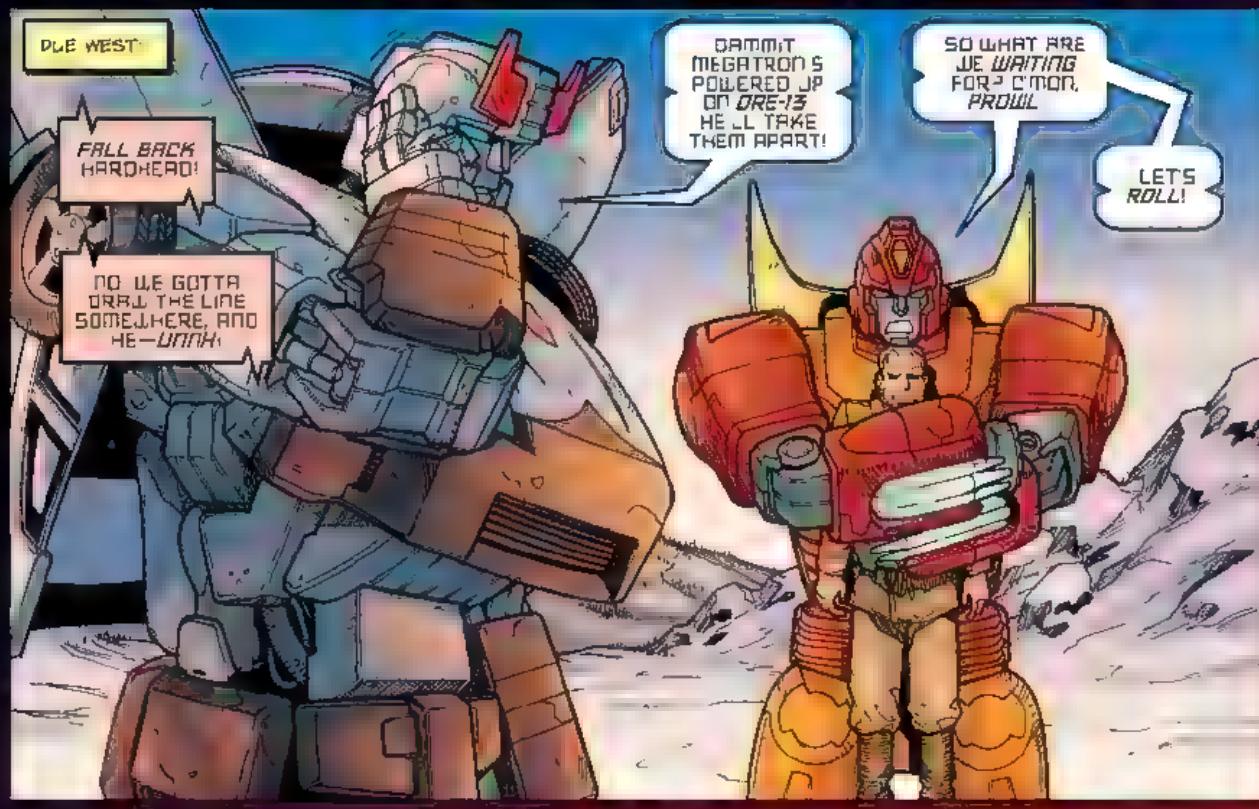
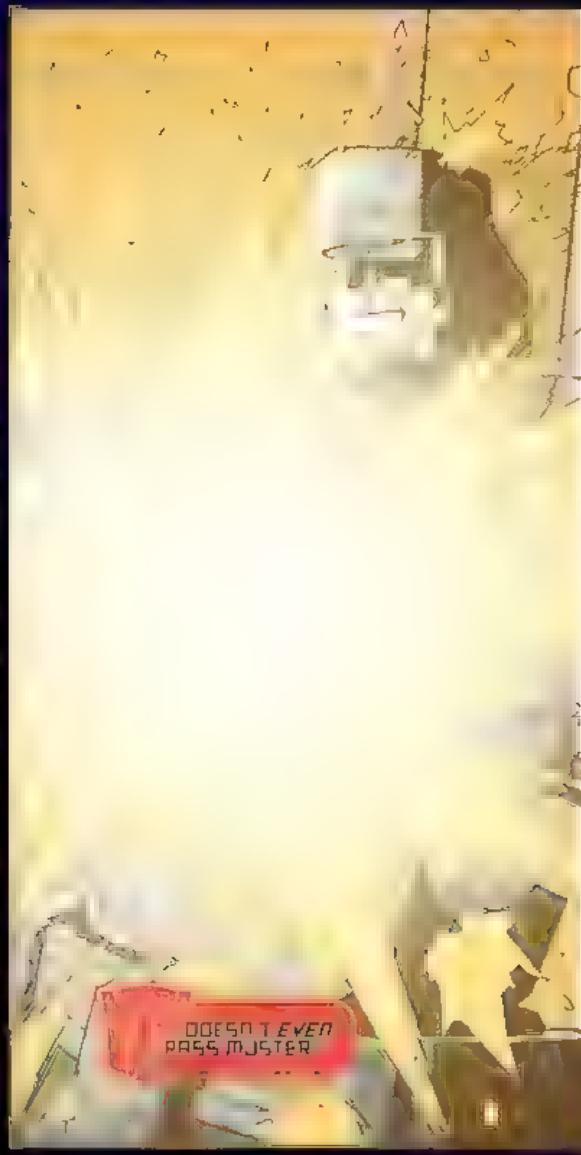
HEAR ME,
AUTOBOTS—
OPTIMUS PRIME
IS DEAD!

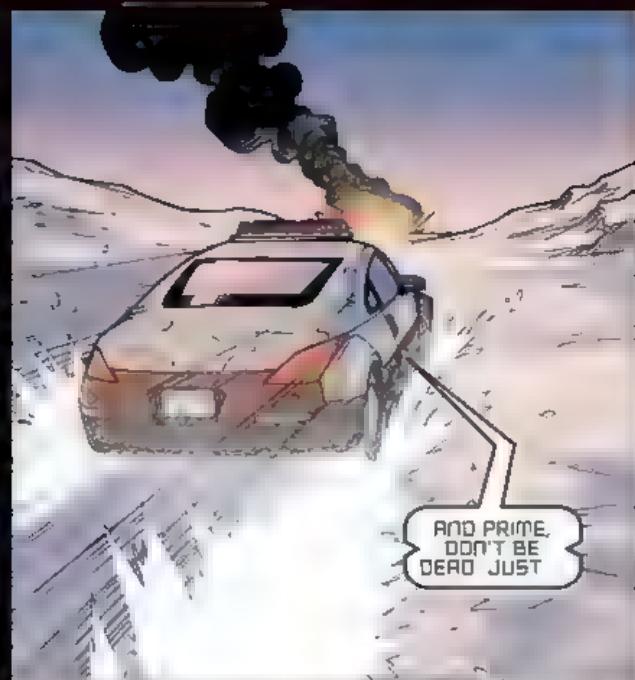
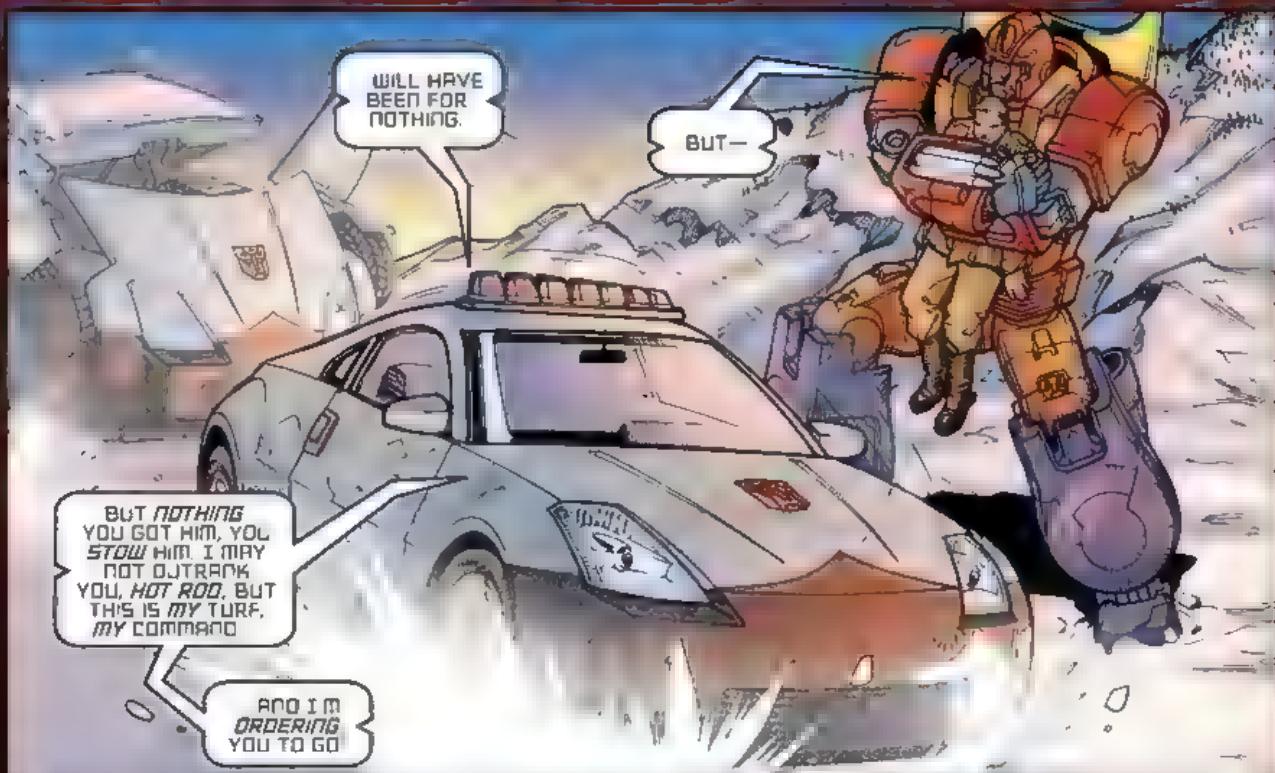
THE FINAL
VICTORY IN THIS
LONG AND BITTER
STRUGGLE
BELONGS TO
MEGATRON!

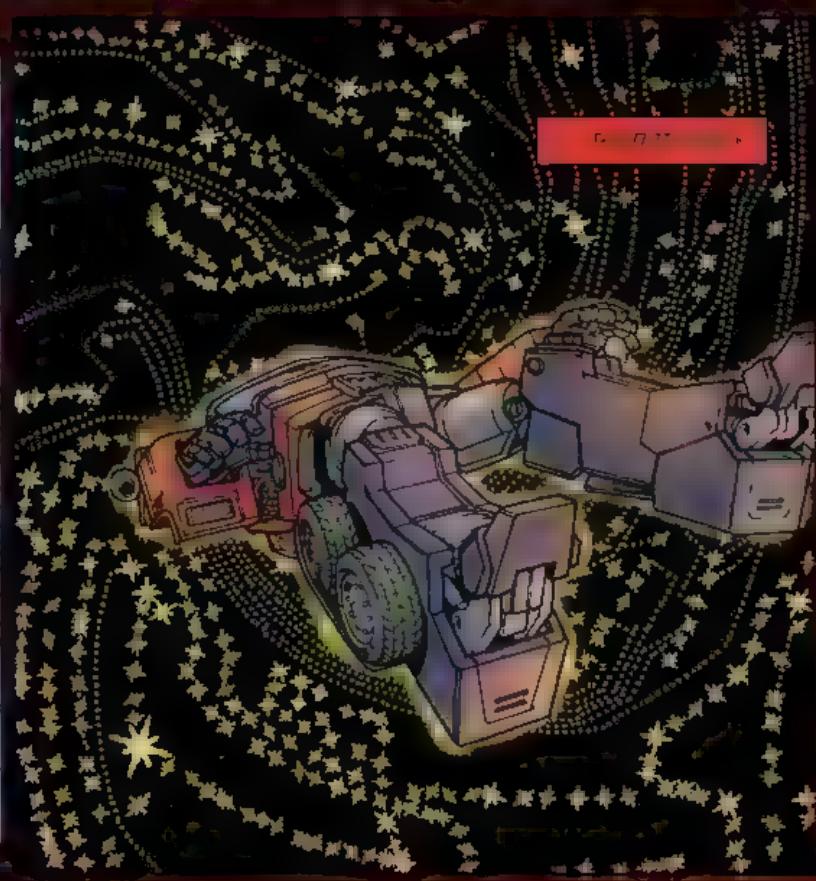
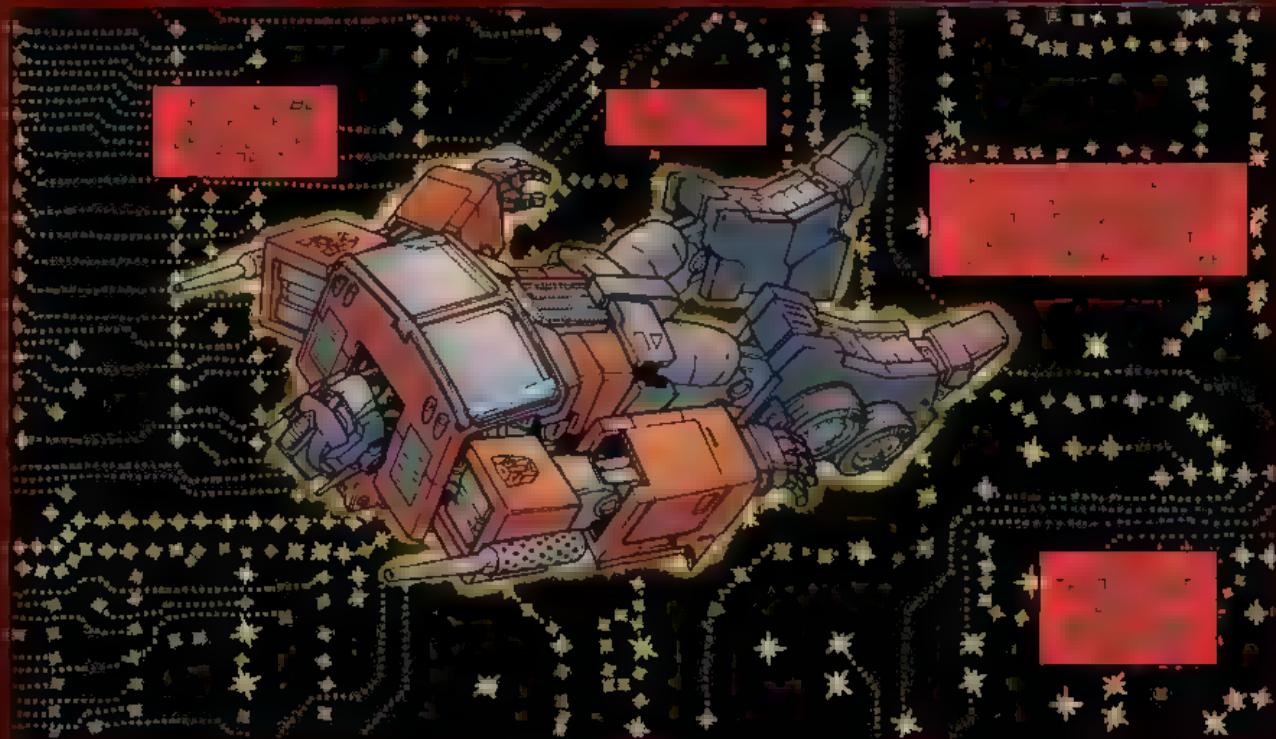
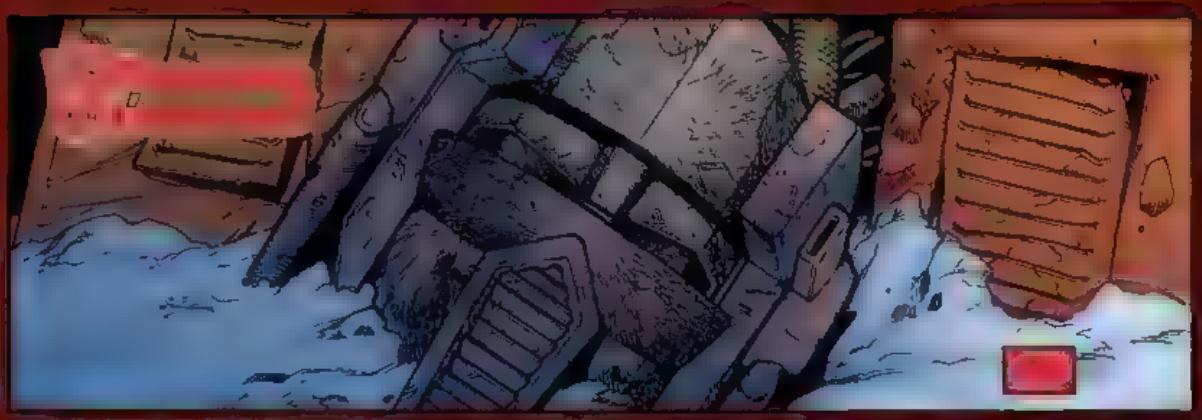
KNEEL
BEFORE ME
OR SHARE
HIS FATE

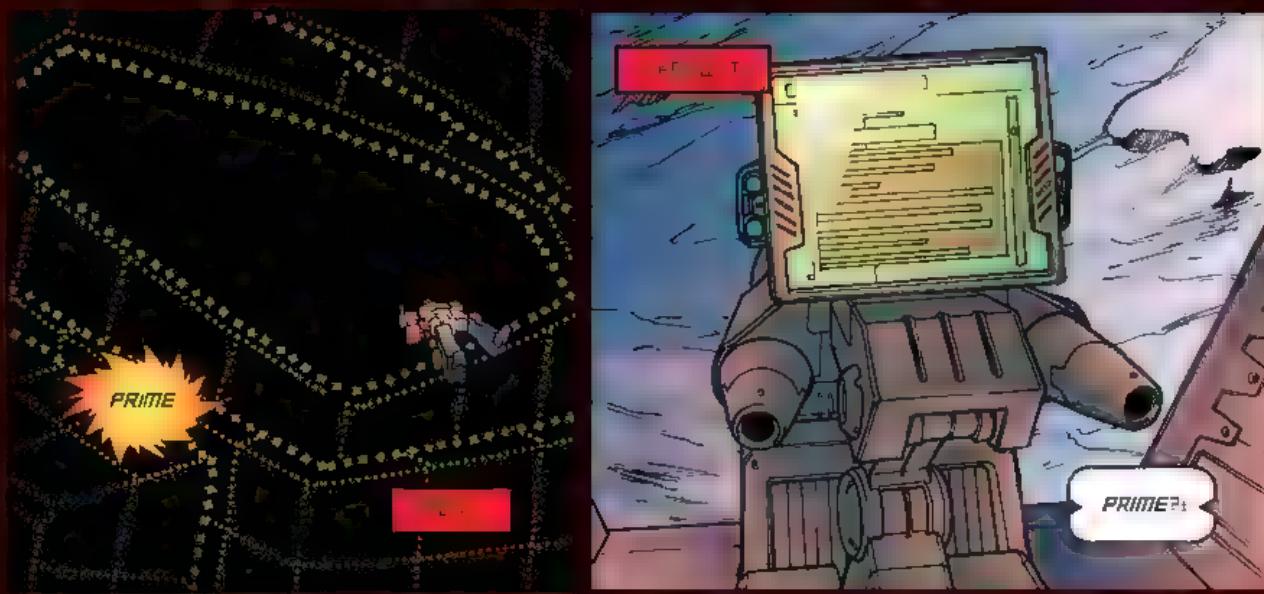
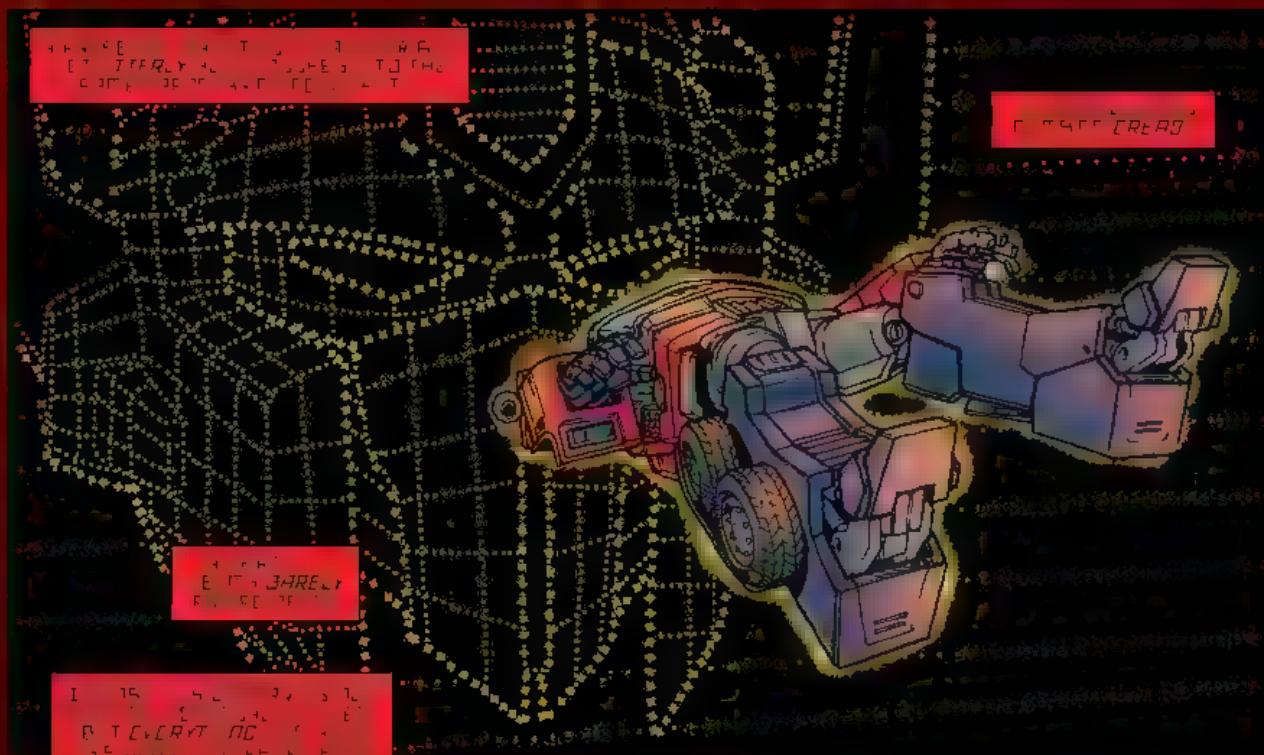


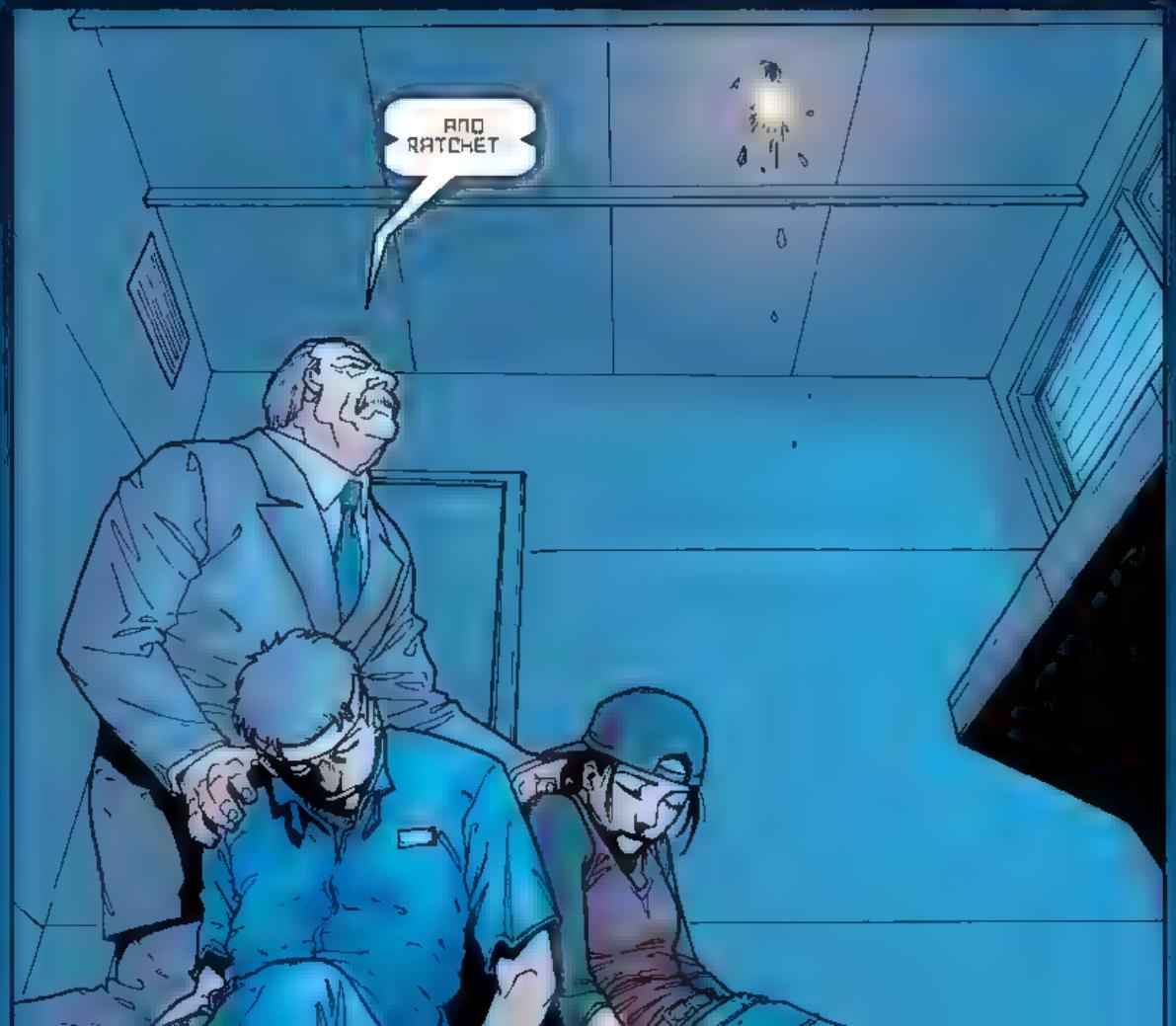














BRASNYA:

ALL OF YOU . . .

BACK OFF—NOW!

THWUMMM!

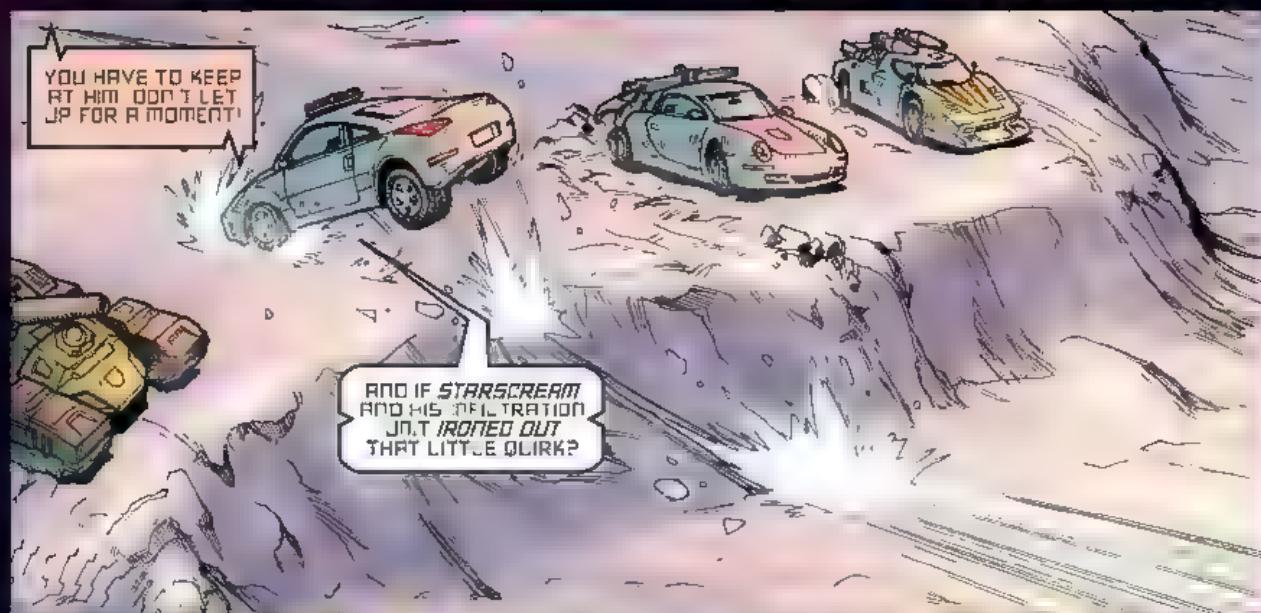
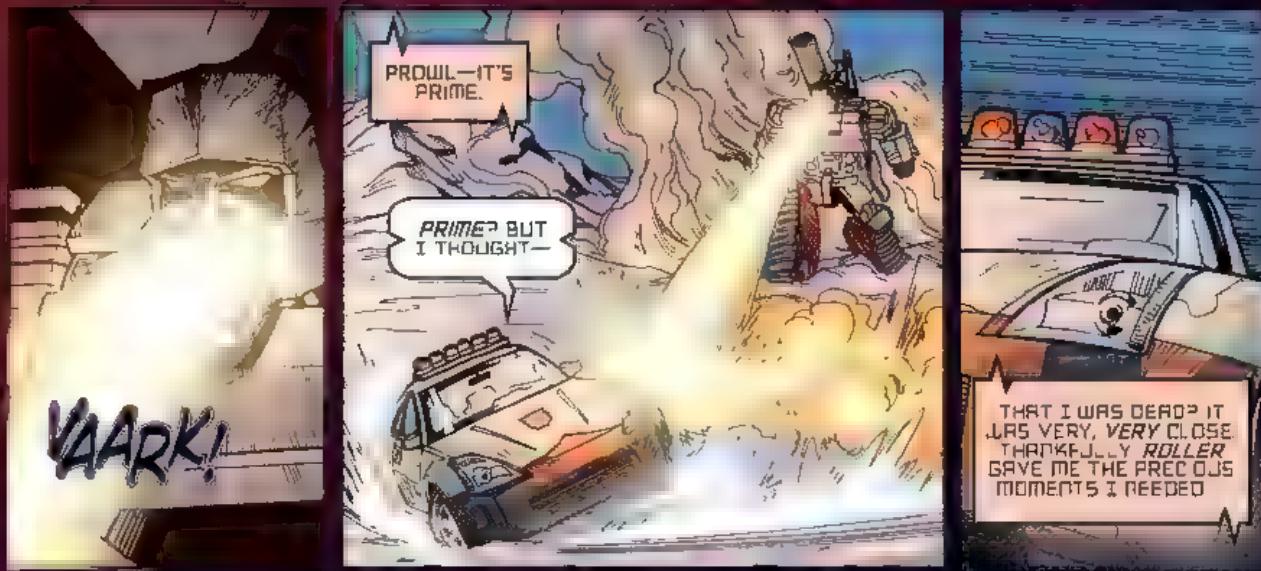
SEEMS MEGATRON'S GOT NO REAL LONG-RANGE WEAPONRY AT HIS DISPOSAL AND NO WAY TO ACCESS HIS ALT-MODE WITHOUT SOMEONE TO HOLD AND AIM HIM SO.

WE KEEP FALLING BACK WHEN WE'VE GOT SOME DISTANCE, WE ATTACK AGAIN. NOW MOVE!

YOU TOO, HARDHEAD

YEH, YEH.

FTUM!
FTUM!



ARK-32:

YOU LEAVE
A HOT
COMBAT ZONE?

THAT'LL BE
ONE FOR THE
DATATRACKS



LOOK, NIGHTBEAT,
DON'T BEND MY
FENDER. JUST BOUNCE
ME TO ARK-19 AND
BE READY TO BOUNCE
ME RIGHT BACK HERE
AS SOON AS I DROP
THE PACKAGE OFF

A DOUBLE
ORBITAL BOUNCE?
YOU SURE?

I'M SURE I
MAY BE A LITTLE
AH, SCRAMBLED.
BUT I'VE SURVIVED
WORSE

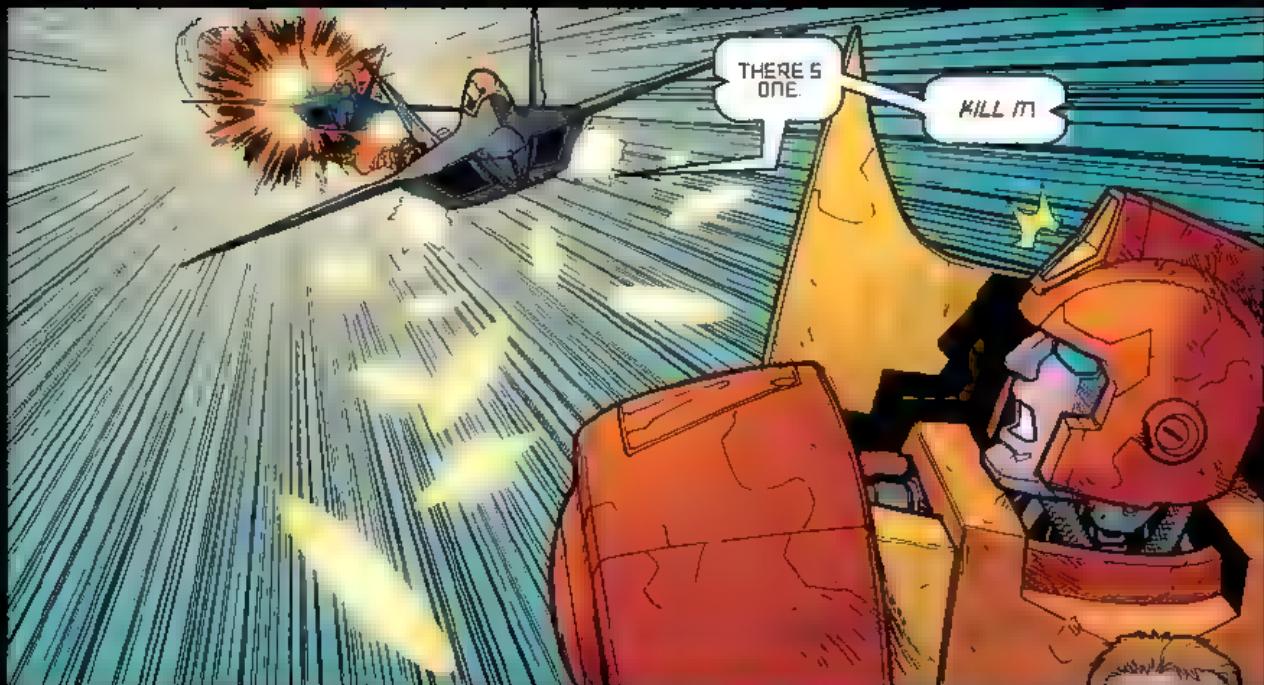


NOW, ENGAGE
THE SEQUENCE,
BEFORE—



THERE'S
ONE

KILL IT



FORT WAYNE.

00:35

YOU'RE
THROUGH,
RATCHET—CUT
POWER.

DONE

00:31

NOW
GET
READY.

00:25

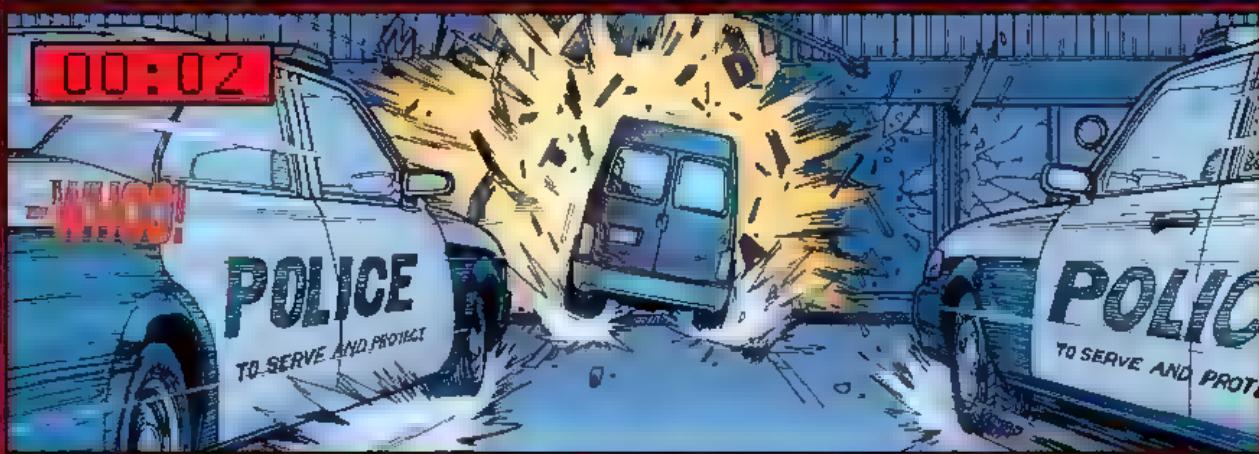
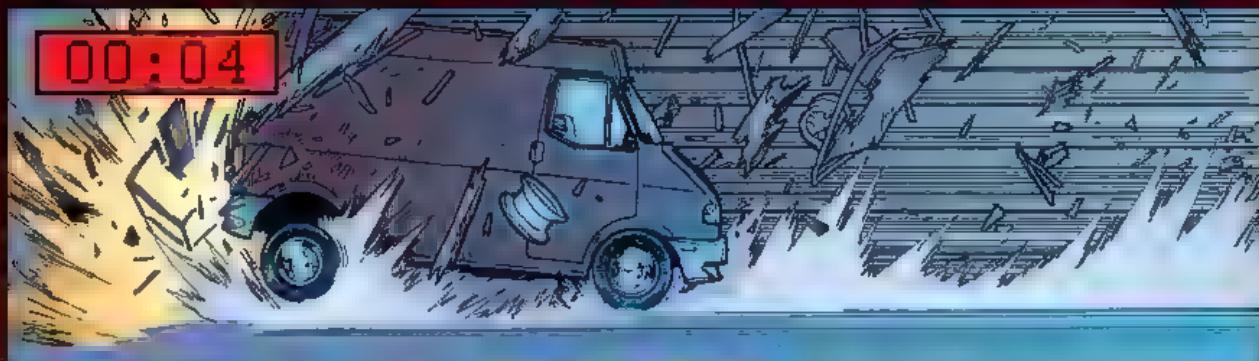
VERITY AND
JIMMY ARE
COMING UP!

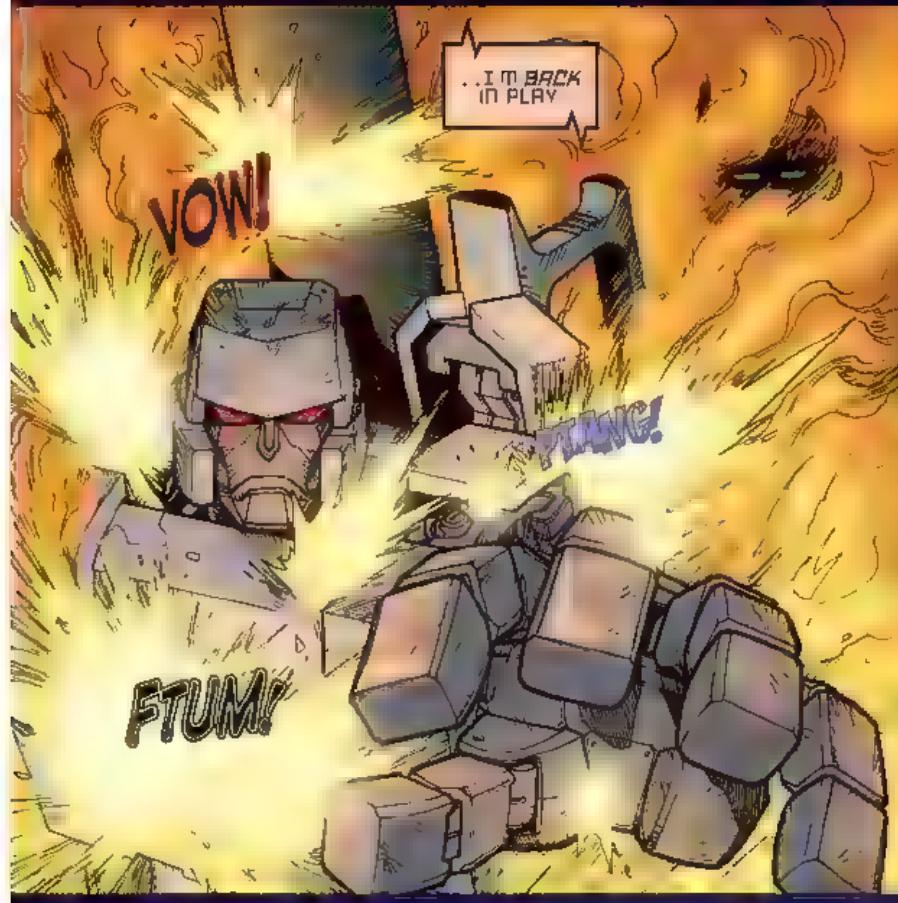
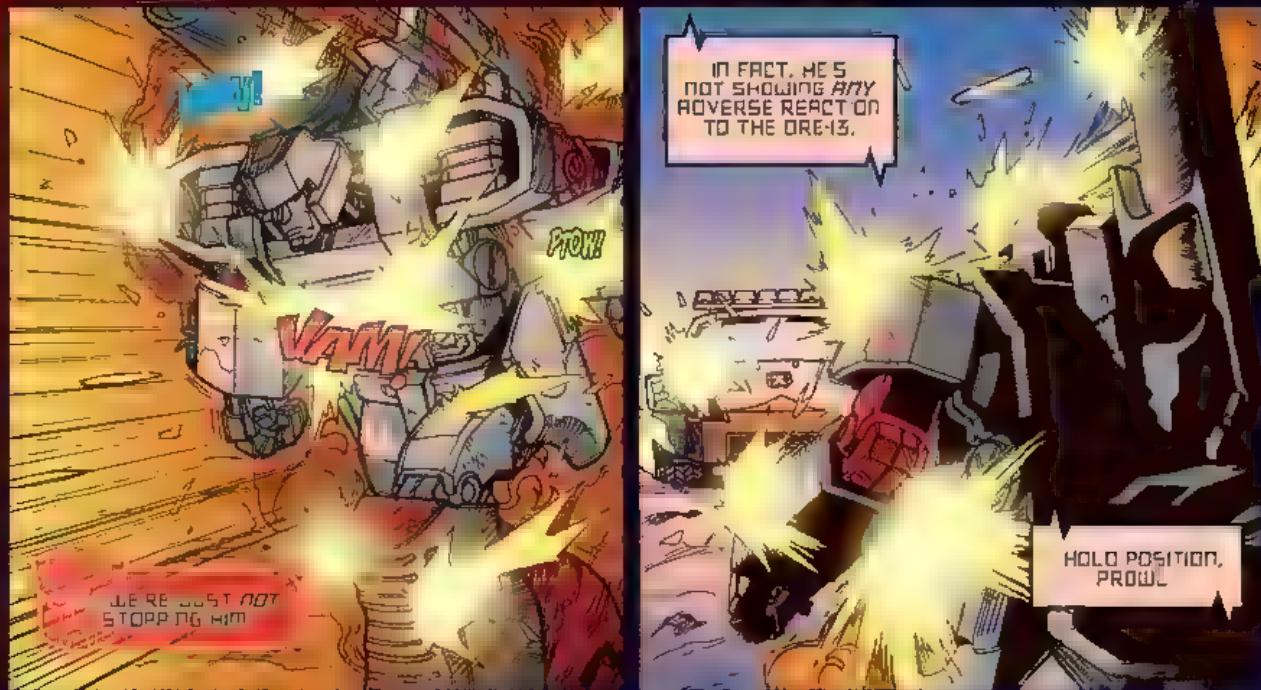
00:18

GOT HER PS
SOON AS
THEY'RE BOTH
CLEAR.

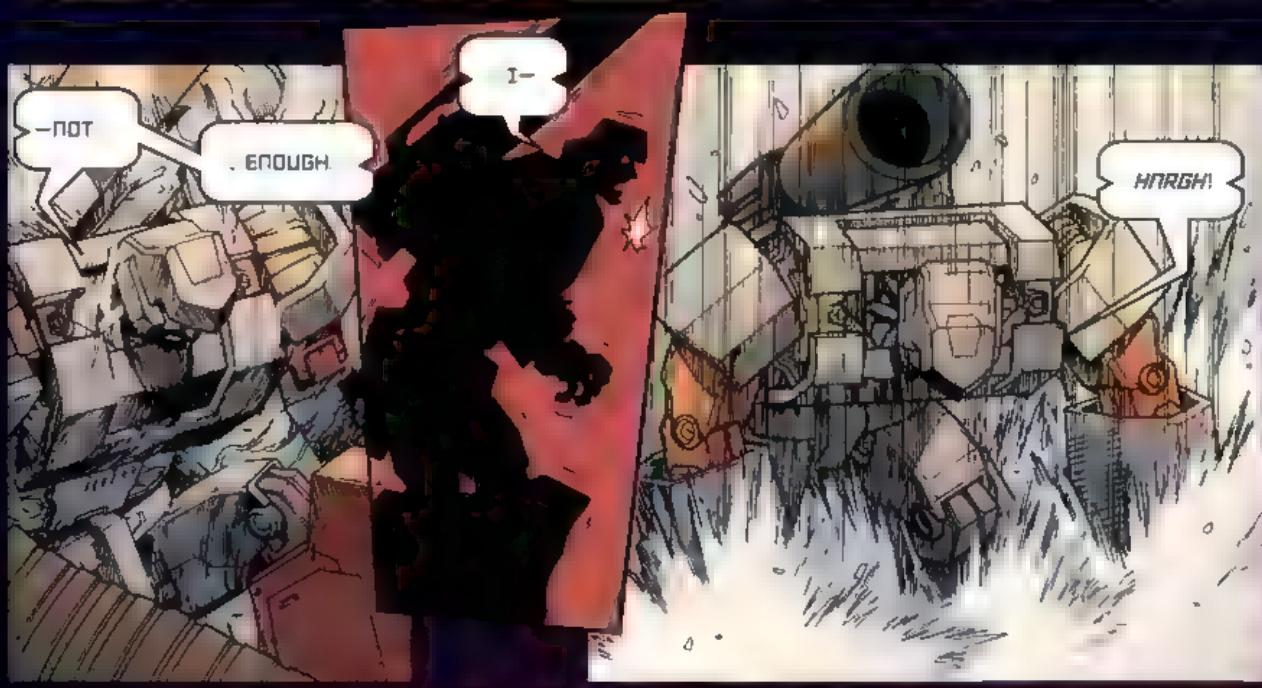
00:11

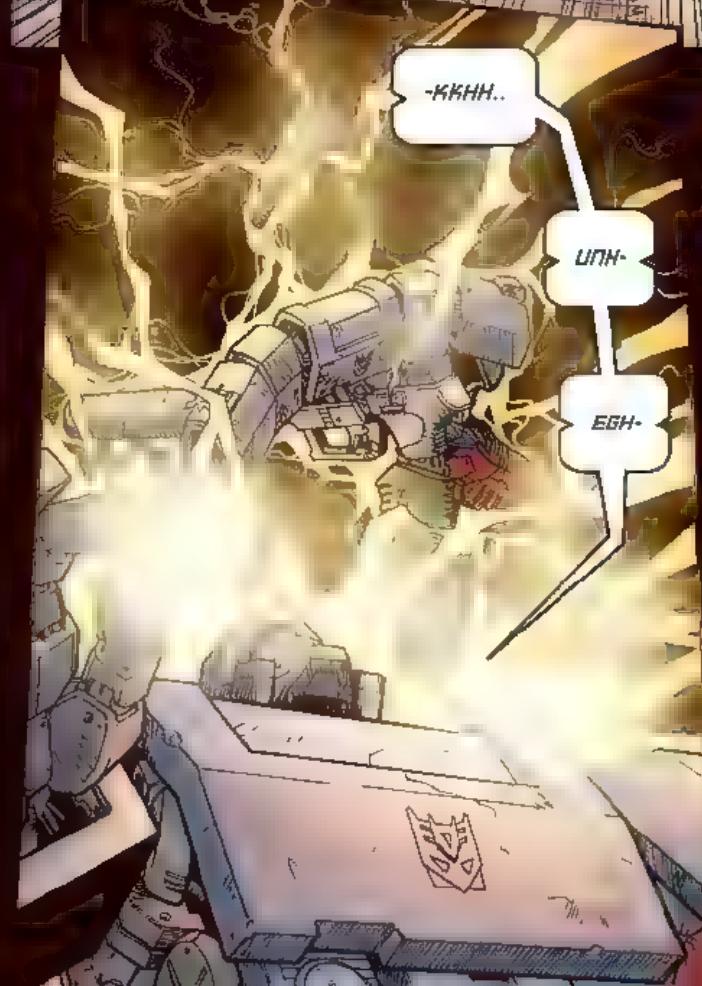
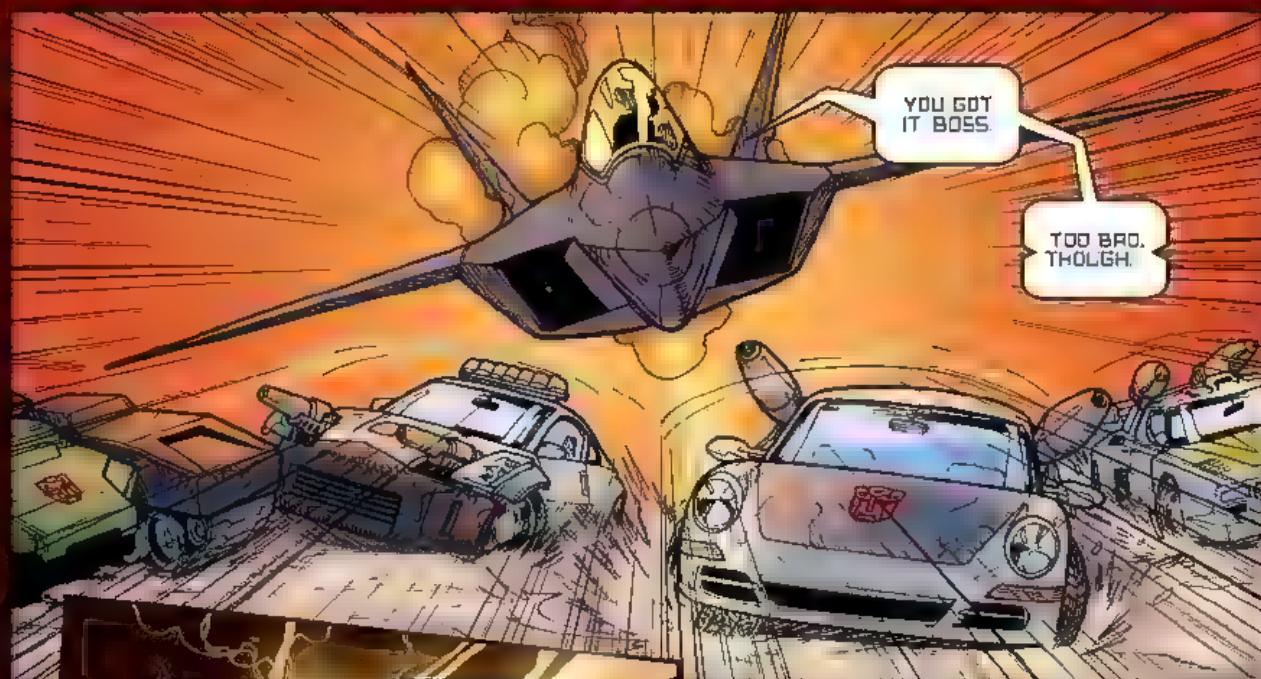
GET
YOURSELF OUT
OF THERE!

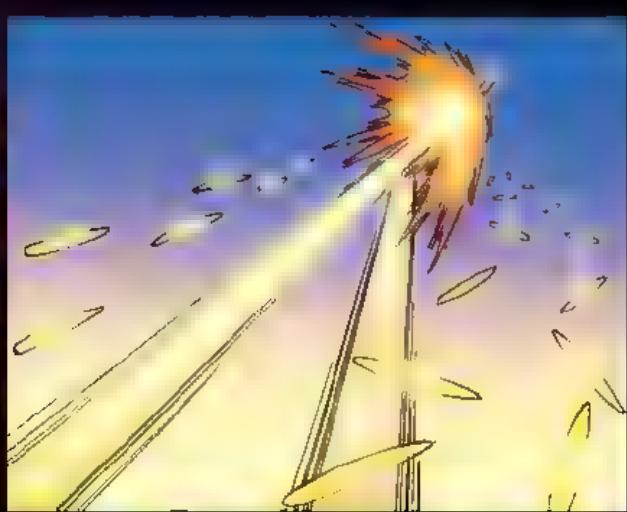


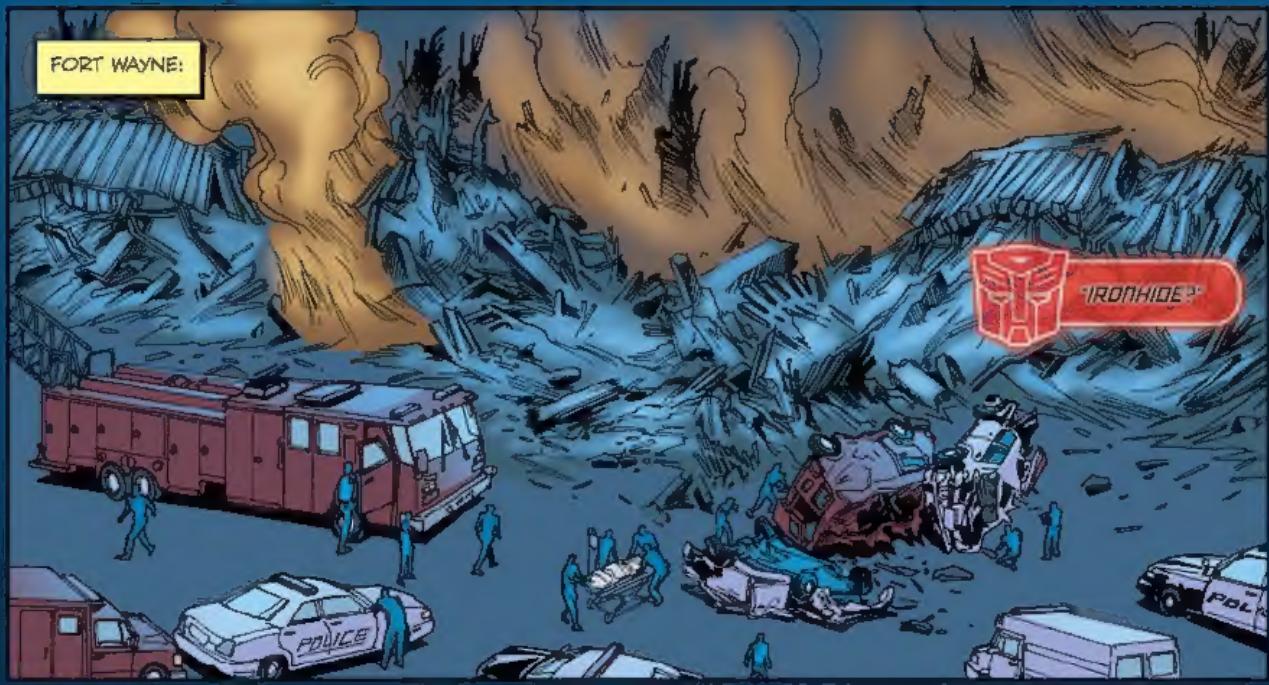




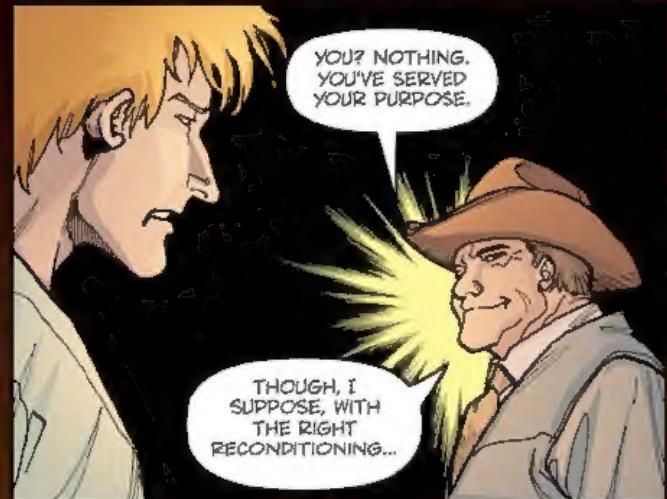


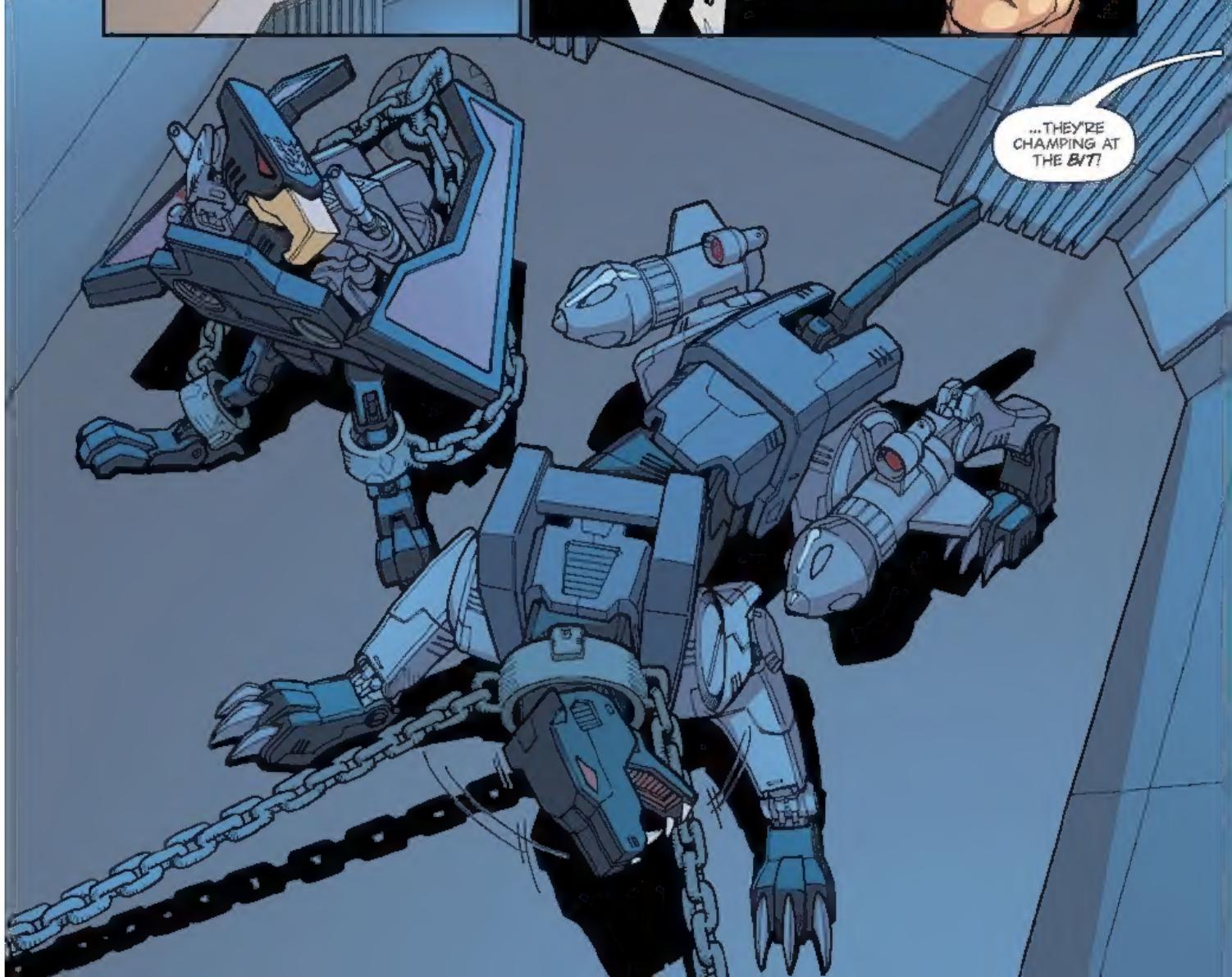






TAMPA, FLORIDA:

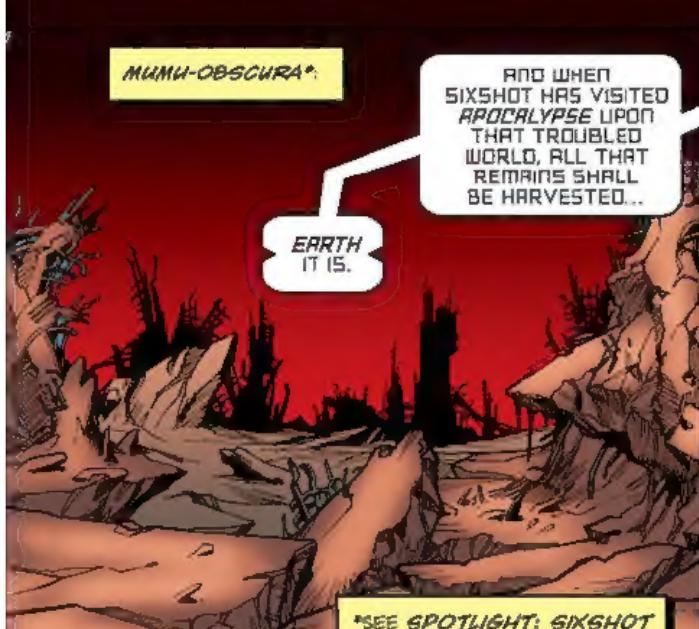




DECEPTICON COMMAND BUNKER, OREGON:



AS PRIME HAS SEEN
FIT TO INTRODUCE
REINFORCEMENTS, SO
SHALL I. ASTROTRAIN...



AND WHEN SIXSHOT HAS VISITED APOCALYPSE UPON THAT TROUBLED WORLD, ALL THAT REMAINS SHALL BE HARVESTED...

...BY THE REAPERS!

*SEE SPOTLIGHT: SIXSHOT

